



No. 66,420

TUESDAY JANUARY 26 1999

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Taken on page 15

FREE BOOKS SCHOOLS

Stephen Lawrence, the police and a new earthyism

Eat out for only a fiver

Taken page 47

30p EVERY WEEKDAY

Fantasy Football League: How did your team get on? Page 46

Storm over advice to teenage mothers

'Give babies for adoption' call by Straw

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

JACK STRAW was at the centre of a storm last night after saying that more teenage mothers should give up their babies for adoption.

The Home Secretary blamed "well-meaning but misguided" social workers for over-estimating the ability of many young women to cope with the financial and emotional burdens of motherhood.

As a result, too many infants ended up being taken into council care and kept in "a state of limbo" until a suitable home could be found for them with foster carers or adopters.

Mr Straw told a conference organised by the Family Policy Studies Centre: "It is in no one's interests, not the mother's, not the child's, nor the prospective parents', to allow a situation to develop whereby a crisis point is reached in the baby's first year because the ability of the mother to cope has been misjudged by well-meaning but misguided people."

While not actually proposing a return to the practice of coercing unmarried young women into having their baby adopted, Mr Straw said that such a decision often resulted in a better life for the child: "If you get to a situation where young mothers feel happy about adoption, that's so much the better. It is better if these adoptions are done voluntarily than if the children are later taken into care," he said.

Mr Straw said that he had been surprised to discover that



there were as many as 3,500 children aged under two in council care, while many childless couples waiting to adopt were kept waiting for years. The Government had issued new guidance to remove unnecessary barriers to adoption, he said, but added: "It is still a sad fact that many suitable couples have been on waiting lists for too long, while children have remained in care."

It had become "a matter of fashion" to move away from adoption, he said. In 1968, there were nearly 25,000 adoptions compared with fewer than 6,000 a year now.

Mr Straw's comments were, however, immediately attacked by adoption workers. Pam Hodgekins, manager of the West Midlands Post Adoption Services, said that removing a baby from its mother could be extremely damaging

for both parent and child. Adoption was nearly always the second best option for a child, while women who gave up their children in the 60s experienced health problems and mental illness.

Pelicia Collier, director of the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering, said that more than 70 per cent of children in care returned to their natural families within a year. "We need to encourage support for all mothers, whatever their situation."

Chris Davies, president of the Association of Directors of Social Services, rejected the Home Secretary's criticism of social workers, but conceded that more could be done to speed up the adoption process.

The reason there are very few babies now offered for adoption is not because social workers discourage it, but because nowadays most mothers in this situation never see a social worker at all," he said.

Veronica Agius, who was forced to give her illegitimate daughter away for adoption 33 years ago, said: "I think about it every day. I have never had any other children, and my daughter says she is not ready to make contact with me. It is my deepest regret."

But Sheila Walker, 59, who gave up her baby son for adoption in 1959, said that it had been the best decision for both of them. "I am glad I made that sacrifice for him."

Trying to help, page 7



Carla Germaine and Greg Cordell after their blind date wedding yesterday

Blind date couple meet on their wedding day

By PETER FOSTER

IT WAS billed as a "scientific experiment in love" and yesterday, after an intimate ceremony attended only by close family, friends and a national television company, the guinea pigs in Britain's first "blind" wedding were declared man and wife.

Carla Germaine, 23, a model, and Greg Cordell, 28, a sales manager, met for the first time and were married at 1pm yesterday after winning a competition called "Two Strangers and a Wedding", organised by a Birmingham commercial radio station.

Let them forget they brought them together, the moment of union was sealed by rings engraved with the station's logo: "96.4FM BRMB".

For the marketing men it was a marriage made in heaven — half the world's press were present as the nervous couple paraded before the cameras for their first taste of a new life destined to be played out under the uncompromising gaze of the British media.

After spending their first night together in the £750 Chamberlain Suite at Birmingham's Hyatt hotel, they will jet off for a honeymoon in the Bahamas — with a tabloid newspaper reporter and a fly-on-the-wall documentary team in tow. On their return they will receive a new Ford sports car for a year, and the run of a £1,500-a-month apartment in Birmingham's recently renovated canal land. But at midnight on January 25, 2000, they must return the keys and find a new home.

The newlyweds, who have signed a pre-nuptial agreement in case things do not work out, were yesterday

quick to scotch suggestions that the wedding was more an exercise in media manipulation than love. "Everyone's expecting us to split up," Mr Cordell said, "but we're going to prove them wrong."

His new wife agreed: "Everyone has their own opinion but we're looking forward to getting to know each other. I know what I like and I'm very pleased and happy. I told them from day one what I was looking for and this is very good." When asked if they were going to consummate the union last night, she said: "You'll never know."

The public will have little difficulty keeping up with the Cordells' progress. As well as a documentary on Channel 4 and regular radio updates on BRMB, they have already been invited on the *David Letterman Show* in New York.

While church leaders and marriage guidance organisations protested that the serious business of marriage was being turned into a media circus, BRMB's organisers for the "Wedding of the Decade" and promised to broadcast the ceremony live. However, the registrar drew the line at sharing it with 700,000 listeners.

Mike Owen, BRMB's head of publicity, defended the wedding as a "serious matrimonial exercise". He said: "We shall be giving Greg and Carla all the support they need. We want the marriage to last as long as possible. They were selected very carefully as the couple most likely to be compatible from the 200 entries we received."

Mr Owen said the station would probably pay for any future divorce proceedings.

NEWS 5

KEF MOORE



Chris Merson

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Hussein chooses his eldest son

King Hussein of Jordan confirmed by royal decree that his eldest son, Prince Abdullah, 36, is his heir, not the King's son, Prince Hamzah, or the King's brother, Prince Hassan, who had been Crown Prince for 34 years. Page 13

Athlete fails test

A British athlete has failed a drug test. A UK Athletics spokeswoman said that for legal reasons she could not give the name, the gender or the substance involved. Page 32

TV & RADIO	50-51
WEATHER	26
CROSSWORDS	26, 52
LETTERS	19
OBITUARIES	21
LIBBY FURVES	18
ARTS	24-26
CHESS & BRIDGE	45
COURT & SOCIAL	20
LAW REPORT	44
BODY & MIND	16
BUSINESS	27-31

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I'm sorry about the little girls — kidnap case man

By ADRIAN LEE

A MAN accused of kidnapping and seriously assaulting two schoolgirls said yesterday that he was sorry for what had happened to them and wished that he could turn back the clock.

Alan Hopkinson, 45, of Langney, Eastbourne, made the statement through his solicitor after appearing at Hastings Magistrates' Court in East Sussex.

He was charged with ten offences: two each of child abduction, kidnapping and false imprisonment and four relating to serious assaults. The court was told that the girls, both aged ten, could not be named.

The former Rhodesian Army soldier and Bank of England worker said nothing during his five-minute appearance. He stared intently at the floor and nodded only to confirm his name and that he understood the terms of his remand. No application was

made for bail and he was remanded in custody for a week. He was also granted legal aid.

After the hearing, Mr Hopkinson's solicitor, Graeme White, made a statement to the steps of the court, saying: "He has asked me to say he is sorry for what happened to the little girls. I hasten to say that no specific admissions are be-



Graeme White, solicitor

ing made. He does hope that they can put matters behind them, given the passage of time, and he has asked me to say that he would put the clock back. He wishes to express his remorse."

Mr White said that his client, who was arrested on Friday, was "depressed and upset" and had been prescribed sleeping tablets. "Obviously it had been a great shock to him to be brought to the police station and held for several days."

Mr Hopkinson, who wore grey trousers and a light grey jacket over a blue pullover, was brought to court from the neighbouring police station through an underground tunnel. Two police officers and two security guards were also in the packed courtroom. An order was made that no picture of Mr Hopkinson should be published.

Bid to end Clinton trial quashed

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

LEADING Republicans yesterday quashed a new attempt to complete President Clinton's trial this week, in a day of plots and accusations that left the impeachment process in chaos.

Trent Lott, the Senate Republican Majority Leader, poured cold water on a bipartisan plan for a "yes or no" vote by Friday on the two articles of impeachment that would have avoided calling witnesses. Although he appeared to have been swayed by House conservatives, however, many of his colleagues admitted that they deeply wanted an early end to the saga, which is exasperating Americans.

The plan, put forward by Tom Daschle, the leader of the Senate Democrats, would have left open the option of a vote to censure the President. Its failure has left both parties searching for a solution, terrified that the process will be-

come uncontrollable if witnesses are called to the Senate floor.

If Monica Lewinsky is called, the nation will be treated to the unpalatable sight of elderly men questioning a troubled young woman about the already well-chronicled details of her sex life. They also fear that if she is called, they will have to summon everyone mentioned in her testimony.

While floundering in the quagmire of the witness question, Congress had the benefit of a new round of observations by Dick Morris, Mr Clinton's former adviser, who himself resigned over a sex scandal. Mr Clinton was "delusional", he said, in feeling victimised when the Lewinsky scandal first erupted, but certainly believed his own line that he had not had sex with the young trainee.

Leading lady, page 15

Golfer's amazing 59 sinks the competition

FROM MEL WEBB

IT WAS, in its way, like six stuns in an over to win a cricket match, a maximum 147 in the final frame to claim a victory on the snooker table, or breaking a world record to win a gold medal in the 1,500 metres at the Olympic Games.

What David Duval, the American golfer, achieved was nothing less than a slice of sporting immortality.

A score of 59 in golf is a mystical figure, a barrier that goes beyond the psychological. Like its counterparts in other sports, it requires high skill. Unlike them, it calls for that skill to be exercised — and concentration maintained — for upwards of five

hours. A 59 needs par figures to be beaten for up to 13 times in 18 holes: club golfers everywhere will know that for the merely mortal, one birdie a round is cause for celebration.

The feat has never been achieved in European professional golf and until Sunday had occurred only twice in America — on neither occasion on the final day of the tournament.

Duval did not only score 59 to win; he needed to score 59 to win.

The undemonstrative Duval, 27, started the final day of the Bob Hope Classic, at La Quinta Golf Club, in California, six shots behind the leader and seemingly out of the picture.

A quiet but grimly determined performer, he had calculated overnight that he might need 59 to claim his second win of the season. Confident performer though he is, he cannot truly have expected to do so.

In the end, Duval, who has been one of the most in-form golfers in the world for the last 14 months, during which time he has won six times, took the title by one shot. With this victory he boosted his earnings by \$540,000 (£328,000) and took his earnings this year to \$1,008,000. Pity the man who finished second. He only had a 66.

Shot-by-shot, page 50



Duval: has won \$1m in 99

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Familiar old words mark passing of the age of consent

Many go into law or Parliament solely so that they can say "buggery" whenever they like, and before the Nine o'Clock Watershed. This sketch lost count yesterday of how often the Home Secretary said it but as Jack Straw said "buggery" for the fifth time, I sensed an astonishing lack of interest.

Every now and then, an issue dies in the Commons. No death is announced, no obituary placed in *The Times*, indeed there is no corpse to

bury. The death is more subtle. One day you go into the Chamber and an issue is alive and kicking. Two opposing sides, confident of their cause, clash. Sparks fly.

Some months later you return to the same debate... and life has ebbed away. The arguments may be unchanged, but one side, now, is only going through the motions. They've given up. Nobody is so vulgar as to crow, but the winners and losers know who they are.

As a Parliamentary contro-

versy, Age of Consent is dead. The dogs may bark but the circus has moved on. The concessions contained in the Sexual Offences Bill launched by the Home Secretary yesterday — measures to protect the vulnerable from those in charge of them — have swung it for reform. Once swung, the dead weight of "commonsense" opinion among politicians is mighty hard to swing back.

How do we know that Age of Consent has died? MPs sense such things through



their pores. Ask not what they are saying — everyone always says the same thing — but how they are saying it, and who is talking. To know the wind, focus not on Members who can change the wind, but those who are changed by the wind. Joe Ashton (Lab, Bassetlaw) is as persuasive a wind-

sock as you will find at Westminster. If a tabloid newspaper could speak, it would talk like Joe Ashton. To get his measure, ponder the phrase "right-minded folk". It is one of Mr Ashton's favourites. In the 1980s, right-minded folk were not campaigning to reduce

the age of consent from 21. Nor was Mr Ashton. In 1994, right-minded folk could more or less stomach a reduction to 18. So could Mr Ashton. Last year, right-minded folk remained worried about the corruption of the young and opposed 16. So did Mr Ashton.

Now, right-minded folk grit their teeth and accept "equality" so long as there is statutory protection for those at school or in institutions. Mr Ashton has urged just such a measure. It is in the Bill. And

Ashton now supports the Bill. He told MPs so yesterday. "I'd like to thank the *Daily Mail* and the *Express*", he repeated, proceeding to read out an armful of newspaper clippings about paedophiles and their vile rings, "tuning in" to the Internet. Shocking. But the shock was routine.

Only one speech caught fire. It is not often a quiet backbencher can hold the whole House for twenty minutes with a speech as reasoned as it is heartfelt. Shaun Woodward

(C) has sometimes seemed a bland successor to Douglas Hurd as MP for Wincey. Yesterday, supporting the Bill against the predominant opinion of his own side, he emerged as a noble one.

Otherwise there was little to raise a cheer, an eyebrow or even a smile. Gerald Howarth (C, Aldershot), trying for the cheer, achieved the smile. "You simply cannot have it both ways!" he cried, opposing the Bill. Can't you? Some of his colleagues have proved otherwise.

MP compares gay laws to slave shame

By JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A TORY MP last night compared equalising the age of consent for homosexual and heterosexual sex to giving women the vote.

Supporting the latest move to reduce the age of consent for homosexual sex to 16, Shaun Woodward (Wincey) told the Commons: "I believe that historians will look back on this period of discrimination against young people with the same opprobrium that we now look back on those who sought to justify the slave trade."

Mr Woodward, a director of the charity Childline, said the issue was about "whether a relationship between two human beings and another should be a criminal act. This is not about urging young people to be promiscuous. It is not about anal intercourse. It is a debate about whether society should consider these people to be criminals at 16 just because of their sexuality."

He added: "As a Conservative, I believe in freedom and the rule of law. Why should the law intervene in the private affairs of citizens when it does no harm to others?"

The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Bill will equalise the age of consent at 16 in England, Scotland and Wales, and 17 in Northern Ireland. It

will also make it illegal for anyone over 18 to have sex with a 16 or 17-year-old over whom they are in a position of trust.

The measure is expected to pass easily through the Commons but to face fierce opposition in the Lords. The last attempt to cut the age of legal homosexual sex, through an amendment to the Crime and Disorder Bill last June, was backed by the Commons by a 207 majority. The Lords defeated it by a majority of 168 after concerns were voiced about putting vulnerable young people at greater risk.

Opening the Second Reading debate, Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, said the age of consent must be equalised because the discrimination was in breach of the European Convention on Human Rights. "This is not a question

of encouraging one lifestyle as against another or of encouraging young people to have sex," he said. "It is a question of equality before the law."

Mr Straw said the new "abuse of trust" offence was designed to protect the most vulnerable young people from adults where the relationship of trust was most strong.

Some MPs, including Donald Anderson (Lab, Swansea East), protested that the protective measures in the Bill did not go far enough and should include those looking after Scouts and Guides and holiday camps. "Why are you so timid and limited on this?" Mr Anderson asked Mr Straw.

Shuart Bell (Lab, Middlesbrough) asked Mr Straw to confirm that the Government did not plan to cut the age of consent to 14 or legalise homosexual marriages. Mr Straw replied: "We have no plans to bring forward legislation in respect to any of these issues."

Sir Norman Fowler, Shadow Home Secretary, said people did not take a prejudiced view of the issue but had concerns about whether the young might be at risk. "The majority would prefer this change not to be made. We should listen to the public and not move further to reduce the age of consent."



Mairead Kelly, speaking for the relatives of dead IRA members, after meeting Adam Ingram at Stormont yesterday

Beatings may prompt sanctions

By MARTIN FLETCHER, CHIEF IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

THE Government hinted at sanctions yesterday unless Northern Ireland's wave of punishment attacks were ended.

At meetings with the political representatives of the three main paramilitary groups, Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, demanded the "arrogant, barbaric" attacks be halted. "There were suggestions about what she could do in the future if she so chose," David Ervine, of the Progressive Unionist Party, acknowledged afterwards.

The Government is facing intense pressure to suspend terrorist prisoner releases until the attacks stop. The Tories have called a Commons debate on the issue to-

morrow and two senior Labour backbenchers, Harry Barnes and Frank Field, yesterday tabled a Commons motion saying the releases should be slowed "as a political sanction against an... organised regime of increasingly brutal intimidation".

Dr Mowlam said she would review the situation in a week or two if the attacks continued, but Tony Blair has admitted that halting prisoner releases could bring down the Good Friday peace accord.

Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness refused to meet Dr Mowlam, claiming she had changed the original purpose of the meeting, and sent more junior members of Sinn Féin instead. Mr McGuinness said his party deplored "punishment attacks", but blamed the lack of a police service that nationalists could trust.

Mr Ervine, whose party represents the Ulster Volunteer Force, called the attacks "immoral and reprehensible" and urged people to report problems to the police.

The human rights group Families Against Intimidation and Terror accused republican and loyalist paramilitaries of 37 beatings and shootings this month alone. Government officials suspect Sinn Féin and the loyalist parties can tone down paramilitary violence when it suits them.

Relatives of IRA victims angrily confronted the families of eight IRA men killed on a bombing mission yesterday. The republican families were leaving Stormont after a meeting with Adam Ingram, the Northern Ireland Security Minister, when the victims' relatives cried "shame" and "apologise" and held up posters.

NEWS IN BRIEF

20-year-old death case: OAP held

A pensioner has been arrested in connection with the murder of an unknown woman who was bludgeoned to death nearly 20 years ago, after DNA testing led to the reopening of the case.

Detectives from Kent travelled to the north of England yesterday in a renewed effort to establish the identity of the young woman, thought to be a hitchhiker or prostitute, whose body was found in Bedgebury Forest, near Goudhurst, in October 1979.

The case was re-opened in October last year after forensic tests were carried out on evidence stored since the 1979 inquiry. Two weeks ago a Kent lorry driver in his early seventies was arrested in connection with the murder and released on police bail.

Helicopter base

A new joint service helicopter command will be based at Wiltshire in Wiltshire, the Ministry of Defence announced yesterday. The headquarters of the combined RAF, Army and Navy unit will control more than 350 helicopters at 10 air bases. It will have around 12,000 personnel and oversee a budget of £300 million.

Fee protest ends

Five Oxford students who were barred from university premises for refusing to pay their tuition fees said yesterday that they had decided to end their protest. Academics voted last week to suspend the four Somerville undergraduates and one from St Hilda's unless they ended their protest immediately.

Uniform reverse

A university has dropped plans to charge student nurses £100 each for the uniforms they must wear while training, after complaints from Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary. Kingston-upon-Thames University intended that 100 trainees should buy them out of their £5,300 annual bursary for living costs.

Collymore case

Stan Collymore, the Aston Villa footballer, admitted speeding at 82mph in a 40mph zone. He did not attend Birmingham Magistrates' Court because he was in club talks about his future. The bench is considering a driving ban and adjourned the hearing until February 8 for Collymore to attend. Under stress, page 49

Delayed justice

William Geary, 100 years old, was fired from Irish police after allegedly accepting a £100 bribe from the IRA over 70 years ago. After persistently lobbying successive governments for a review of his case, it has now been referred to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform by the Prime Minister.

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Pensions left £1bn short by computer troubles

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

THE Government is sitting on nearly £1 billion which it has failed to pay into private and occupational pension schemes because of the bungled launch of a new computer system.

The problems with Europe's largest civilian computer system, which cost £140 million, are also forcing benefits to be calculated by guesswork for more than a million claimants, including pensioners, widows, unemployed and sick people.

The 160,000 new pensioners so far affected are losing an average £130 a week, although some are losing as much as £100 a week. Fewer than 15 per cent of Britons who invest in private or occupational pensions have had contributions paid promptly by the Department of Social Security.

When the computer crisis is resolved and the payments are finally made, savers will be offered compensation by the Government at an interest rate of 6 per cent a year. Pension companies argue that customers with schemes that in-

vest in the stock market could have achieved a much better rate of interest and will have no chance to make up the difference.

Quentin Davies, Conservative social security spokesman, said: "Just paying the rebate with interest is not satisfactory. People must be put back in the position they would be in if the Government had not made these mistakes."

The Contributions Agency has said that it will only pay compensation to people owed £100 or more. "This is grossly unfair," said David Kendall, Liberal Democrat social security spokesman. "For people who are living on or near the breadline, even a few pounds a week makes all the difference."

The National Audit Office said the computer system had 1,900 problems, of which 1,589 had been unresolved. The computer switch began last July after three years' preparation.

The supplier, Andersen Consulting, worked through the Christmas holiday with Contr-

butions Agency staff in Newcastle upon Tyne but failed to clear the backlog. Andersen Consulting has paid £37 million compensation to the DSS.

Those with most to lose are new claimants, including people reaching pensionable age, becoming unemployed or widowed. Already 1.2 million people on jobseeker's allowance, 374,000 on incapacity benefit and 25,000 widows are affected. They cannot be sure of receiving the correct amount because their benefits are calculated on the basis of national insurance paid, and many of those payments are not yet on the computer.

The Government had been warned against introducing the new National Insurance Recording Computer System (NIRS2) at the same time as reforming pensions.

Stephen Timmins, a Social Security Minister, said: "It will take until the end of this financial year to resume normal operations, and it will take longer to catch up on all backlogs."

ITV has good news for Bond

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

JAMES BOND will be among the first to benefit from the demise of *News At Ten*. ITV confirmed yesterday that the last of its full 10pm bulletins would go out on Friday, March 5. The first interrupted film to be screened across its slot will be the 007 adventure *GoldenEye*.

Executives also promised that comedy, factual programmes, drama and a new current-affairs programme with Trevor McDonald would fill the vacant airtime to try to increase ITV's audience share.

Feature-length dramas such as *Kavanagh QC* will get late peaktime slots, and at 10.30pm there will be new comedies, such as the forthcoming 1970s teen show *Days*

Like *These*. *GoldenEye* will be screened on March 10.

ITV halted its audience decline last year and this year it would try to reverse it. Chief executive Richard Eyre told advertisers yesterday. The huge success of quiz show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* helped ITV to push its 1998 audience share to 37.9 per cent. Its 1999 target is 39 per cent.

Entertainment formats will be piloted to try to repeat the success of *TV Nightmares*, *Man O Man*, *Give Your Mate a Break* and *Truth or Consequences*. All of which get series this year. Mr Eyre said: "How ever great we make ITV, I don't think it is reasonable to imagine we can make it so fabulous that people decide not to go multi-channel."

Watchdog to lift lid on MPs' gifts

By ROLAND WATSON, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MPs would be forced to declare all gifts, loans and hospitality from fellow members of Parliament under a new interpretation of rules by the incoming Parliamentary Commissioner.

Elizabeth Filkin made clear yesterday that she believes a 25-year-old understanding of the interests MPs have to publish should be overhauled following the Peter Mandelson home loan affair. If accepted by the Commons, the change would lift the lid for the first time on gifts and hospitality, including the loan of holiday homes, between MPs.

The proposal would cover gifts to an MP or their spouse from another MP of more than £125, as well as other benefits worth more than £225. It

is likely to alarm some MPs who regard such deals as private affairs.

However, in her first public comments since Mr Mandelson resigned from government following the revelation of his £373,000 loan from Geoffrey Robinson, the former Paymaster-General, Ms Filkin said that all arrangements between MPs should be declared in the interests of transparency.

Mr Mandelson registered his loan on her advice, but Ms Filkin, who takes over from Sir Gordon Downey next month, made clear she had not cleared him. She is still to report to the Commons Standards and Privileges Select Committee on whether she believes he should be censured.

Yemen wants to try London cleric

Daniel McGrory and Stephen Farrell on Sana'a's frustration over Britain's perceived inaction

YEMEN yesterday asked Britain to extradite the extremist Muslim cleric Sheikh Abu Hamza al Masri, whom it accuses of masterminding the kidnapping of 16 Western tourists last month. Security chiefs in the capital Sana'a say that the controversial London-based religious leader is also behind a plot to blow up British targets in Aden.

The demand comes just days before five British Muslims are put on trial for their lives, accused of being behind the foiled Christmas Day plot. At least three of the Britons are said to have confessed that they were sent to Yemen by Sheikh Hamza, who preaches at the Finsbury Park mosque in North London.

The Egyptian-born cleric, who lost both his hands in Afghanistan, is also leader of the Supporters of Shariah group, which advocates the rule of Islamic law and whose Internet web page offered military training and depicted a hand grenade.

Security sources in Yemen say he ordered the British Muslims to contact Abu Hassan, leader of the December 28 kidnapping which led to the deaths

of three British tourists and an Australian, and received a satellite telephone call from Hassan during the abduction. In their confessions the men say Sheikh Hamza gave them \$2,000 (£1,250) to pay Abu Hassan for the weapons and their training at his terrorist base.

A security source in Sana'a said last night: "We believe Hamza is the mastermind behind both these terrorist operations. As the British police do not seem to be taking action against him we want to see him put on trial here." They claim to have "irrefutable evidence" linking Sheikh Hamza to the kidnapping and the bomb plot. Scotland Yard is still investigating Hamza's alleged involvement.

Yesterday, Ali Abdullah Saleh, the Yemeni President, gave Vice Henderson, the British Ambassador, a message for Tony Blair, asking that Sheikh Hamza be handed over. The official news agency

SABA said the letter called for Sheikh Hamza's extradition "for committing acts of terrorism and sabotage in Yemen and in a number of Arab countries". The agency added: "The letter expresses the discontent of the Yemeni Government with the terrorist activities led by the terrorist Abu Hamza al Masri and other people from British territory."

Sheikh Hamza last night dismissed the extradition request, saying he would not receive a fair trial, criticised Yemen's human rights record and claimed the arrested Britons were tortured into making their confessions.

He insisted he had no involvement with terrorism in Yemen and claimed the same rights to freedom of speech as Salman Rushdie, pointing out that the author was granted protection when he caused offence to Muslims with *The Satanic Verses*. "If you are talk-

ing about the truth as terrorism I cannot deny that, but if you class sending people for terrorist activities then I had nothing to do with it," he said. "Salman Rushdie's words sicken your heart and my words are ugly in your ears, but my words are the truth and his are false."

Although Yemen has no extradition agreement with Britain, the Home Office said last night that an ad hoc request would be considered in the same way as any other. However, a spokesman refused to discuss whether an application had been received, saying "we neither confirm nor deny extradition requests".

Among those arrested in Aden were Sheikh Hamza's stepson, Mohsen Ghallan, and an Algerian who is engaged to his sister. His 17-year-old son, Mohamed Kamal Mustapha, is still on the run.

The men's lawyer, Salim Basunaid, will complain about their treatment when they appear in court tomorrow. Their appearance in court comes after pressure from Whitehall for the Prosecutor General in Yemen to speed up their trial.



Sheikh Hamza outside the American Embassy in London in August after US aircraft bombed sites in Sudan

£50 watch helped thieves steal cars worth £350,000

BY MICHAEL HARVEY

A THIEF used a wristwatch to steal dozens of luxury cars after discovering it could unlock doors and switch off alarms, a court was told yesterday.

Sajjad Aslam used the £50 Casio watch, a programmable remote control for television sets and video recorders, to crack the codes on car key fobs. After programming the infra-red frequencies into his watch during test drives at car showrooms, he sent accomplices to steal the vehicles.

Minshull Street Crown Court in Manchester was told that Aslam, 29, masterminded a lucrative car-ringing racket for two years. He and his gang gave the stolen cars new identities and sold them through agents across Britain.

Previous owners' names in the false registration documents included the snooker star Steve Davis, the cricketer Wasim Akram and Alexander O'Neal, the soul singer. Police believe vehicles worth at least £350,000 were stolen, doctored and sold on. Makes included Mitsubishi Shogun, Toyota, Nissan and Rover.

Yesterday Aslam, from Stockport, was sentenced to four and a half years in jail after pleading guilty to masterminding the racket. Six accomplices admitted conspiracy to

steal and were jailed for periods ranging from nine months to two years.

The racket was discovered when police arrested one of the accomplices, Biny Amin, 32. He refused to take off his watch and suspicious officers sent it for testing: experts found the car codes.

Detective Constable Ian O'Connell, who led the inquiry, said watches like the CMD40 could be bought in any High Street. "These watches may be the sort of hi-tech items that 007 gets from Q in the James Bond movies but the fact is that they are very real and millions of cars are at risk of being stolen."

He added: "I have worked on car crime for eight years and have never seen anything like this."

A spokeswoman for Casio insisted the CMD40 could not be used to "grab" infra-red codes without the key owner's knowledge because the watch had to be placed within a few centimetres of the key fob. "We feel satisfied that the CMD40 presents no increased ability for car thieves," she said.

However, the AA said several million cars, mostly built before 1995, were potential victims to programmable remote controls.

Judge criticises parents for protecting paedophile head

BY JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

A JUDGE accused parents at a leading preparatory school yesterday of ignoring signs that the headmaster was a "fixated paedophile" because their main interest was the school's academic results, and some were enjoying fee discounts.

They rejected a "wealth of evidence", said Judge John Wroath, who chaired an independent Schools Tribunal into 13 complaints against Robin Lindsay, the headmaster and proprietor of Sherborne Preparatory School in Dorset.

The three-strong panel unanimously ordered that Mr Lindsay, who resigned last June, should be barred from holding any school post. The tribunal criticised the

Department for Education and Employment and Mr Lindsay's professional association for failing to take action more quickly. The first investigation into allegations of "inappropriate behaviour" took place in 1985 but an official note of complaint was not served until last year.

The judge's most serious criticism was directed at the parents, who were said to have obstructed successive police and social services inquiries. Many continue to support Mr Lindsay, in spite of "serious and numerous concerns" expressed by inspectors, and consider traits such as walking around the school in pyjamas and an obsessive interest in

boys' physical development as merely eccentric.

Judge Wroath said: "The parents choose to ignore the wealth of evidence as to the appellant's unacceptable behaviour and regular lateness or absence from lessons."

The tribunal found that there was insufficient evidence to uphold three complaints of sexual assault made by former pupils. It did, however, accept the view of a forensic psychiatrist that Mr Lindsay was a "fixated paedophile".

See Greene, who had two children at the school between 1981 and 1986, said: "The judge's comments are infuriating. How dare he suggest that we turned a blind eye?"

70 and was headmaster for 26 years, withdrew his appeal against disqualification, waiving his right to contest the allegations. The complaints included charges of maladministration and regular lateness or absence from lessons.

The tribunal found that there was insufficient evidence to uphold three complaints of sexual assault made by former pupils. It did, however, accept the view of a forensic psychiatrist that Mr Lindsay was a "fixated paedophile".

See Greene, who had two children at the school between 1981 and 1986, said: "The judge's comments are infuriating. How dare he suggest that we turned a blind eye?"

Ex-soldier puts the boot in for army footwear

BY SUSIE STEINER AND ELIZABETH JUDGE

A FORMER soldier is demanding compensation from the Ministry of Defence because he says that training in heavy combat boots caused permanent disability in his legs.

Christopher Hossack, 32, accused the MoD yesterday of negligence in letting him wear the boots for long-distance running. He says he was medically discharged from the Army and unable to earn a living.

The MoD, which contests the claim, told the High Court that Mr Hossack's problem was caused by flat feet.

Michael Curwen, for Mr Hossack, said: "Mr Hossack's case about the boot is not that it was entirely unsuitable for army use but simply it was not appropriate as much running as he was required to do in it."

Mr Hossack, from Sunderland, joined the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers in 1985 and took part in military training that involved running on Tarmac. He says he experienced pain in his ankles within a few weeks but put it down to his boots being new. Five months later he was given the highest fitness ranking possible and in 1988 was asked to join the battalion boxing team, which increased the intensity of his

training. After an operation in 1993 Mr Hossack was discharged in September 1994. He worked for a while as a lorry driver but has lived on incapacity benefit since 1997.

Mr Curwen said: "Mr Hossack has a crippling condition. He can't run at all, can't walk for more than a couple of hundred yards before feeling pain and he can't stand on his feet for any length of time."

He admitted his client suffered from flat feet. "We say that may have contributed to the problem but was not the source of the trouble."

Mr Hossack is suing the MoD for £400,000. The case continues.



Hossack: told court he is unable to earn a living

Pupil and teacher 'had sex at school'

BY ADAM FRESCO

A WOMAN told yesterday how she became lovers with her history teacher when she was a "besotted" 14-year-old. The former pupil, now 28, said that she and Daniel Angadi had sex on school premises and that he took topless pictures of her when she was a pupil at an independent girls' school in London. "I was desperately in love," she said.

Twice-married Mr Angadi, from Leytonstone, East London, denies five charges of indecent assault in 1985 and 1986. Su-

san Tapping, for the prosecution, said that although the charges were indecent assault they involved full intercourse.

The former pupil told Southwark Crown Court that the relationship developed after a school play which was written by Mr Angadi. Her mother, a single parent, was concerned about her progress at school and encouraged her to get extra help from Mr Angadi.

He became a close friend of her and her mother before the start of the sexual relationship, which ended in 1990. The woman said that she blurted out what

had happened between the two of them to her former English teacher at a school function last year.

Under cross-examination she admitted that she had felt "jealousy and rage" when she learnt that Mr Angadi had started an affair with another woman while she was at university. She denied that she had made the allegations only because she was upset to learn at the function that he was happily married.

Mr Angadi says that the sexual relationship began only after she had left school. The trial continues.

Hitting circus animals does them no harm, says Chipperfield

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE



Ms Chipperfield denied cruelty to a chimpanzee

MARY CHIPPERFIELD, a prominent member of the world-famous circus family, yesterday told a court that kicking and hitting animals was not cruel.

Ms Chipperfield, seeking to justify hitting a crying baby chimpanzee because it refused to go to bed, said that inflicting pain did not necessarily harm animals. Ms Chipperfield, 61, denies 21 charges relating to animal cruelty and neglect, and said that she would do the same again.

Ms Chipperfield told Andover Magistrates' Court that she "really cared" about animals, but that kick-

ing a dog that was lying in the way or a chimpanzee that would not do as she wanted was acceptable.

Her husband, Roger Cawley, 64, a government zoo inspector, admitted flouting the rules he was appointed to enforce. Mr Cawley, who denies seven charges of cruelty and neglect, admitted under cross-examination that elephants at his farm had been shackled for 24 hours a day on several occasions.

Mr Cawley said that he had had the elephants shackled because "we were having staff problems and we didn't want to make staff work extra-long hours on Christmas Day". "I didn't think leaving them shack-

led would cause them unnecessary suffering," he said.

Both Ms Chipperfield, who appeared in court under her married name, Mary Cawley, and her husband admitted knowing that one of their keepers, who was recently imprisoned for four months' imprisonment for cruelty to elephants, had previously been imprisoned for manslaughter.

Earlier, in evidence at the start of the second week of the trial, Ms Chipperfield said a change in the public perception of circuses had prompted her father, Jimmy, to reconsider what was good for animals and promote the freer environment

of wildlife parks by introducing the concept at Longleat in Wiltshire.

Ms Chipperfield told the court that she now did little animal training, concentrating instead on animal dealing. She said that during her career she had worked with more than 60 keepers, and that the thing they had complained about most was the harsh way she treated people.

Asked about her approach to the welfare of animals in her charge, Ms Chipperfield said she had bottled chimpanzees, lions, tigers and hippopotamuses in her home. She said that she had personally fed Trudi, the chimpanzee she is accused of

treating cruelly, hourly after it was nearly killed by an adult chimpanzee.

Trudi was later transferred to a cage where, Ms Chipperfield admitted, it spent 15 hours overnight in a darkened box.

Ms Chipperfield said that by the time chimpanzees were a year old, they had developed fangs, and that both she and her daughter had permanent scars after being bitten by them in the past.

Ms Chipperfield, who brought to court the sticks and whips she was seen using on several animals in a secretly filmed video, said that she suffered from arthritis and could

not use much force when wielding them. She admitted hitting the chimpanzee after it bit her finger.

"I gave her a couple of sharp ones. She would have felt them but they could not possibly have harmed her," she said. Asked to elaborate, she said that it was all right to cause pain when it did no harm.

Charles Gabb, for the prosecution, told her: "You are master of all the animals in your kingdom. They will do as you say when you say. If they don't they will be beaten."

Ms Chipperfield replied: "Not beaten." Asked how she would describe their treatment, she replied: "Touched." The trial continues.

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Trying to help children of the revolution

Alexandra Frean looks at the social changes that have led to a new plan for unmarried mothers

IN THE early 1960s, when abortion was illegal, the children of unmarried teenage mothers were routinely taken away by social workers and given up for adoption. Within the space of two generations, unmarried motherhood is far more common and social workers are legally bound to prevent children having to be looked after away from their natural families.

The figures expose a revolution in social attitudes towards birth and marriage. In 1975, 9 per cent of all live births were outside marriage. The figure had risen to 23 per cent by 1985 and 37 per cent by 1997.

Among teenagers, the rates are even higher, putting Britain at the top of any league table.

Although the advent of the Pill has meant a decline in the overall number of babies born to teenagers - from 63,500 in 1975 to 41,900 in 1995 - the percentage of those births taking place outside marriage has soared. In 1975, 32 per cent of births to women aged under 20 were to unmarried mothers. This had risen to 89 per cent by 1997 - nearly nine out of every ten teenage births. At the

same time there has been a massive fall in adoptions. In 1968, at its peak, nearly 25,000 babies were adopted in Britain. Today the figure is closer to 6,000. In a recent study of teenage mothers, conducted by the Policy Studies Institute, one pregnant young woman summed up the feelings of many of her peers when she said she would rather have a termination than consider giving her baby away.

Partly as a result of these changes, there are now 1.6 million single-

parent families in Britain, with a total of 2.8 million dependent children, up from 570,000 one-parent families and one million children in 1971. These dramatic shifts in public attitude have profound implications for policy and the public purse.

Although reluctant to stigmatise single mothers, the Government is becoming increasingly concerned that, in allowing these trends to continue unchecked, it may be sowing the seeds of intractable social prob-

lems for years to come. Reluctant to alienate Cabinet supporters who see lone-parent families as an acceptable alternative lifestyle, the Prime Minister has chosen to tackle the problem by ending more single mothers off benefits and into the workplace.

Given that a lone parent with one child under the age of 11 gets housing and other benefits worth £134 per week, and that there is a considerable body of evidence to show that children of working parents

perform better at school, it is seen by many as the policy line of least resistance.

The introduction of the working-family tax credit and a new childcare allowance means that the lone parent of one child under 11 would now be able to boost her income by £67 a week if she took a full-time (35-hour) job at the minimum wage of £3.60 an hour - enough to make a considerable difference to her child's lifestyle.

In addition to this incentive, sin-

gle parents will now be asked to show up for compulsory interviews at Jobcentres before they can claim benefit, but with no loss of benefit if they fail to attend. There they will get one-to-one help from a personal adviser to find work and top up their pay with the appropriate benefits and tax credits.

None of this, however, will succeed unless the Government can also improve access to high-quality, low-cost childcare. To this end it has launched a National Childcare Strategy, which is aiming to create one million extra day-care places for children aged 4 to 14.

Judge halts porn film blackmail hearing

By PAUL WILKINSON

A MAN accused of extorting almost £500,000 from a retired bank manager who bought a set of pornographic videos more than 20 years ago was cleared yesterday after a judge described the alleged victim's evidence as "inconsistent and unreliable".

During the eight-day trial, Brian Crossling was said to have used threats of exposure to force Mr X to hand over pension pay-outs, sell and remortgage his homes and even borrow from friends.

The case at Newcastle Crown Court collapsed when Mr X said in evidence: "He didn't blackmail me as such, there was never any threat." He said that he had felt sorry for Mr Crossling, who had told him of a family tragedy.

Mr Crossling, 40, from Roddymoor, Durham, denied blackmailing Mr X and demanding £449,500 between 1972 and July 1997.

Mr X said: "I took pity on him. Mr Crossling had a daughter who died. He was very depressed when it happened. She was about three and died from meningitis. He poured his heart out to me and asked me for some money. I felt sorry for him. He did not threaten me."

Judge David Wood told the jury: "There is no case against this defendant. Mr X's evidence was so inconsistent and unreliable that no jury could convict."

CJD victim's family wins verdict of misadventure

One meal of beef may have led to death, reports Simon de Bruxelles

A SINGLE meal of beef may have been responsible for the death of the first known victim of the human brain disorder linked to "mad cow" disease, an inquest was told yesterday.

The family of Stephen Churchill, who died aged 19 in 1995, told the inquest in Wiltshire of his descent from typical schoolboy to shambling wreck. They had fought for 3½ years for the right to an inquest into his death from the condition that has since become known as new-variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, after "natural causes" was originally recorded as the reason for the disorder.

Dr James Ironside, of the CJD surveillance unit at the University of Edinburgh, told the inquest that the schoolboy had almost certainly contracted the disease from eating sausages or burgers containing infected beef.

The West Wiltshire Coroner, David Masters, who recorded a verdict of misadventure, said: "On the balance of probabilities the route of transmission is due to the random

consumption of a meat product infected with BSE. It can be, and probably was, just one random consumption."

Since Stephen's death, 35 people have died of new-variant CJD and a further eight cases have been confirmed.

As the verdict came in, Stephen's mother Dot collapsed in tears. She was comforted by her husband David and daughter Helen. Mr Churchill said later: "It is quite a terrifying thought that one single meal could create such a dreadful disease in one person and randomly affect the rest of the population."

His wife added: "When the coroner said 'misadventure' it was like saying that Stephen should never have died. It brings it home that this disease was man-made. It should never have happened. There are so many young people dying from this and it is tragic."

Stephen, from Devizes, in Wiltshire, was a normal teenager with an impressive academic record and an ambition to become an RAF fighter pilot when he first began to show symptoms of brain dis-



Stephen Churchill with his mother Dorothy, father David and sister Helen. He died, aged 19, in 1995

ease. At first the symptoms were mild and attributed to depression. Stephen did surprisingly badly in his mock A levels and left the Air Cadets.

Then in August 1994 he nearly died in his mother's car when he found himself inexplicably driving on the wrong side of the road. Soon Ste-

phen's co-ordination and memory began to fail and he was suffering frightening hallucinations. He became a virtual recluse, emerging only reluctantly from his bedroom.

Tests that he had in hospital suggested a degenerative brain disorder and his parents were told his condition was in-

curable. He was admitted to a nursing home, where he died in May 1995. Mrs Churchill said that it had crossed her mind that his illness resembled BSE, the then-mysterious infection killing cattle.

She said: "I did say to my husband that it might be related to BSE because you see the

cows staggering but we dismissed it as a stupid thought. We had a varied diet. One of [Stephen's] favourite foods was sausage. He did have burgers and spaghetti bolognese, all the foods everybody ate during the 1980s." Last year the Churchills gave evidence to the Government's BSE inquiry.

Tributes to the man who saved the Mail

THE late Viscount Rothermere, proprietor of the *Daily Mail*, was interested not only in history, newspapers and beautiful women, but also in reincarnation, the congregation at his memorial service in Westminster Abbey was told yesterday.

One of his editors, facing falling circulation but emboldened by drink, asked his boss if he was not worried that he might reappear in his next life as a road sweeper. Lord Rothermere immediately fielded the question: was the editor not worried that he himself might end up as a road sweeper in his present life?

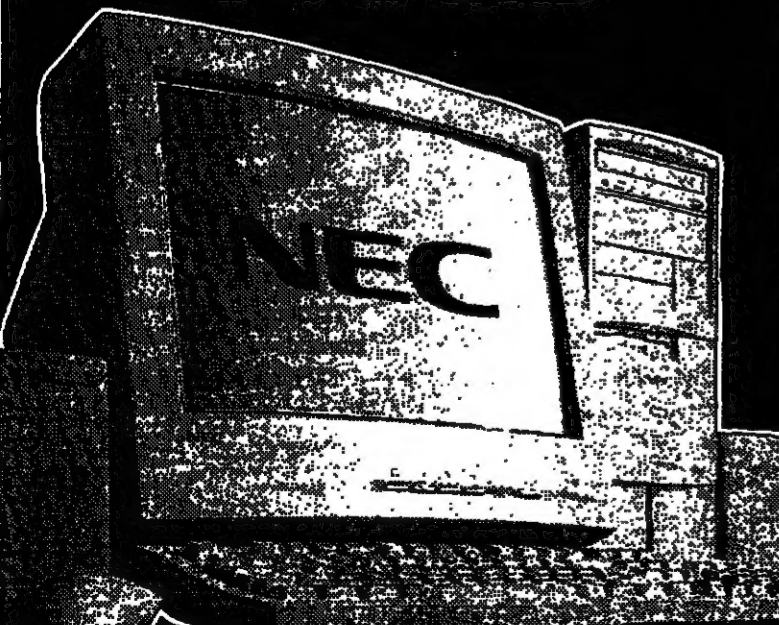
More than 1,100 people, led by Tony and Cherie Blair, William and Ffion Hague and Sir Denis and Baroness Thatcher, filled the abbey to hear Paul Dacre, Editor-in-Chief of the *Mail*, describe his former chairman as the greatest newspaper proprietor of his age.

After inheriting the dying newspaper 27 years ago, Mr Dacre said, Lord Rothermere had not only rescued it by realising that there was a vast untapped market of emancipated women readers, he had also turned it into a major media empire.

"He possessed that rare alchemy of contradictory talents - a brilliant business mind and a talent for understanding the creative process of newspapers," Mr Dacre said.

Memorial service, page 20

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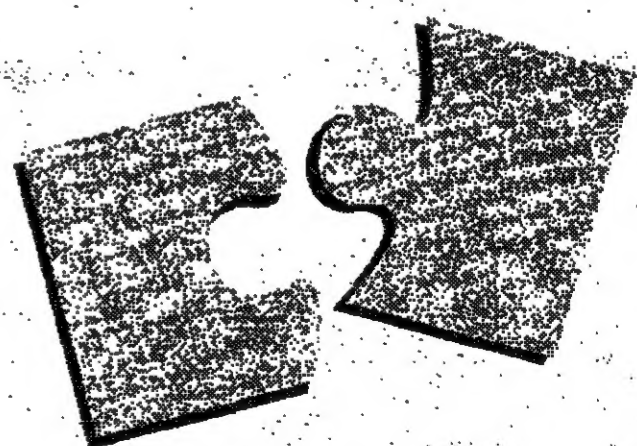
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مکان لایحل

Lecturer's lone bypass stand angers locals

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A LECTURER who gave up home and career to be an anti-roads protester was yesterday singlehandedly blocking the last stage of a new bypass.

Margaret Jones, who will be 50 on Saturday, is holed up in a derelict warehouse, the only remaining member of a group who broke in two weeks ago and declared "squatters' rights". Swathed in damp blankets and yelling through a hole in the roof, Dr Jones said yesterday: "It was not a huge step for me to do this. Politics has always been in me and I am doing it because I believe in it."

Two years ago she was a lecturer in American literature at the University of the West of England in Bristol, with a house in the suburbs. She gave up her job in 1997 to devote herself to environmental protest. Two weeks ago Dr

Jones, who is single and does not have children, cut her final ties to her old life when she sold the house.

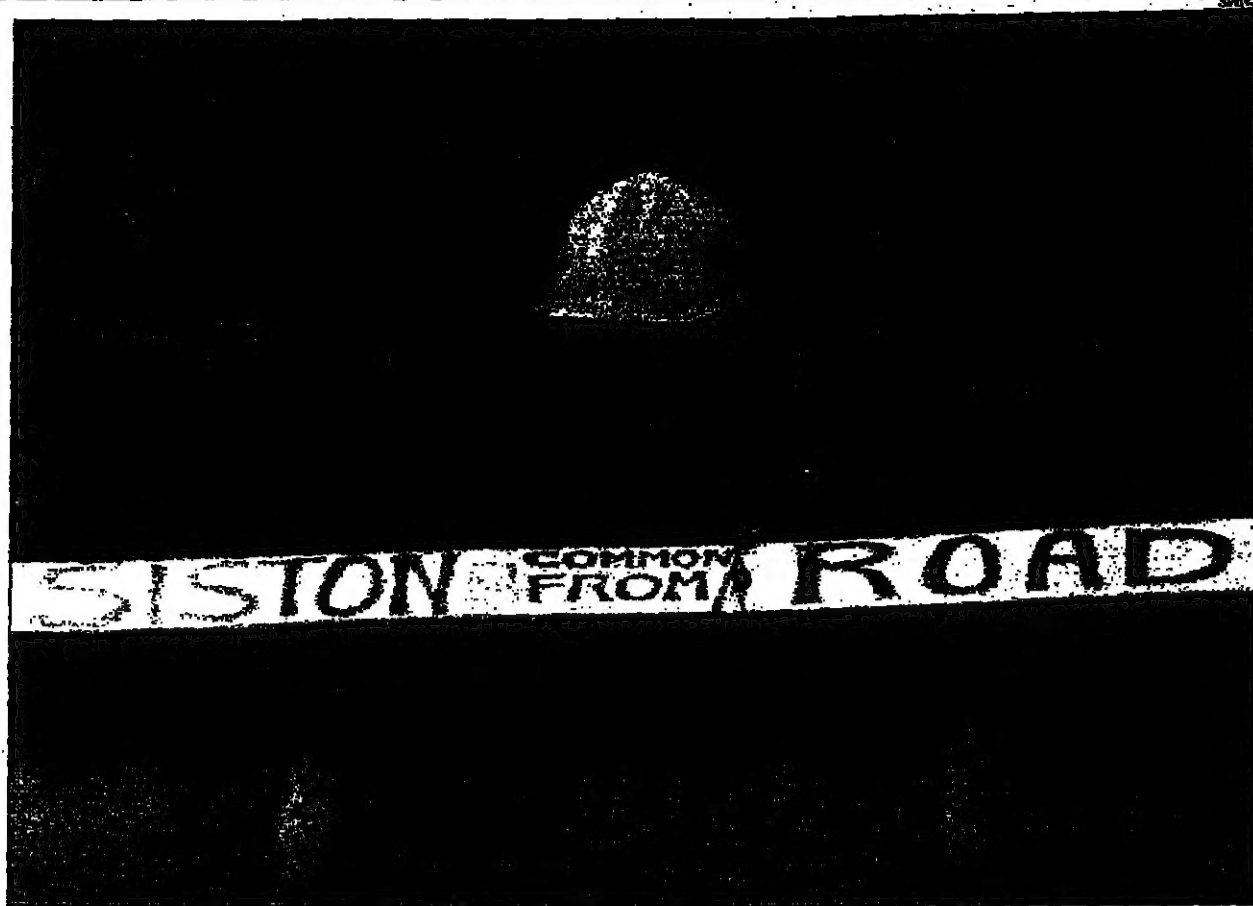
Eight protesters broke into the warehouse in Warmley, near Bristol, two weeks ago in an attempt to stop the Avon Ring Road scheme. Seven of them went out for provisions shortly afterwards and were unable to return after contractors blocked their path. Now Dr Jones remains alone behind the fencing and security guards, supplied through the wire by supporters.

The ring road stretches ten miles around the eastern fringes of the city. South Gloucestershire council had been due to start work on the final stretch in 1993, but two campaigners, Barry McNeveny and Andrew Nicolson, conducted a legal challenge that delayed it for five years. The cost of the

project rose by £3 million and the two men's £100,000 bill was met through legal aid. The House of Lords threw out their case last April and £4 million was allocated to keep protesters away from the construction site at Siston Common.

Dr Jones's stand has angered locals who want the bypass completed to keep traffic away from residential streets. On Sunday, residents turned up to protest at the delays.

John Hunt, a Labour councillor and spokesman on planning and transport, said: "I object to these self-appointed people [the campaigners] who try to impose their point of view on the masses. I know I speak for the vast majority of locals who have suffered years of misery with relentless traffic and noise. I could possibly understand if this was a new



Hard-headed: Margaret Jones, who has given up her university job to block the progress of the Avon Ring Road.

road, but all we are trying to do is complete an existing one. They are not from around here and they do not have the support of local people."

Dr Jones says she has been an eco-warrior "in spirit" since

her home in Hertfordshire was demolished to make way for a road when she was 11. She taught in the United States before returning to Britain in 1992.

The council is now trying to

gain an eviction order through the courts. Dr Jones's involvement in "direct action" protests has landed her in court in the past, and she is becoming something of a legend among fellow protesters. Rowland

Dye, of Stop the Avon Ring Road, said: "Margaret is a remarkable woman and we all have tremendous respect for her." On Saturday they will attempt to smuggle in a birthday cake.

Boy found hanging after row over mess

By PAUL WILKINSON

A BOY was found hanging by his England football scarf soon after arguing with his parents about his messy bedroom.

Adam Firth, 12, went to his room after being told off for not tidying it by his mother Julie and father Rob. They later found him hanging from his bunk bed.

Adam was a pupil at Balby Carr school, Doncaster. A spokesman said that teachers had told the 1500 pupils of the death. "Adam was a model pupil, very tidy and well-mannered. There had been no indication that anything was wrong," the spokesman said.

Detective Inspector, Dick Venables, of South Yorkshire Police, said: "It would appear he had a minor dispute with his parents regarding the state of his bedroom. These are tragic circumstances and an inquest will be opened to look at what exactly happened." Mr and Mrs Firth, who are believed to have another son and a daughter, were too upset to comment.

Grieving isle advertises for young family

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE Hebridean isle of Iona is advertising for a family to move there after a boating accident wiped out almost all its young men.

A house, described as having B&B potential and previously occupied by one of the four victims, has been advertised to let, but only families with young children have been asked to apply.

As is the case on most remote Scottish islands, Iona's population has been shrinking steadily over recent years but the accident in December has heightened the impact. The population stands at 102, of which 40 per cent are more than 60 years old.

There is one baby on the island and the primary school's four pupils are due to move in the summer to Oban High School on the mainland. Unless there is an influx of youngsters, islanders fear that the primary school may close.

Evelyn MacPhail, an Iona community councillor, said: "There are no other children of school age and if the school closed it would be another blow to the community."

"It would also make it more difficult to attract newcomers without a school. All those

who died in the boating accident may well have set up their own homes on the island and had families of their own. It is a very depressed island at the moment."

The four men were returning home from a Christmas dinner-dance on the island of Mull in the early hours of December 13 when their wooden dingy was swamped by a wave during the one-mile crossing.

They were Alisdair Dougall, 19, David Kirkpatrick, 23, both fishermen, Logie MacFadyen, 24, a farmer, and Robert Hay, 23, a tour boat operator. Their friend, Gordon Grant, 33, who also runs a tour boat, managed to swim ashore. The bodies were recovered earlier this month.

Gordon Grant senior, the father of the survivor, said: "There just aren't enough jobs on the island and housing is a problem. The only work we have is through tourism during the summer and many of the houses here are rented out as holiday homes."

A spokesman for Argyll and Bute District Council said the future of the school would be discussed at the next education committee meeting.

Euro vote hope for caged hens

By MICHAEL HORNSBY

UP TO eight million hens arrive at slaughterhouses every year in Britain with broken bones, it is claimed today.

The battery cages in which most egg-laying birds are reared make bones brittle because hens are denied exercise, according to Compassion in World Farming.

The publication of the report comes on the eve of a vote in the European Parliament on the future of battery cages. In Britain alone some 30 million hens, about 85 per cent of the flock, are kept in cages.

The report says that brittle bones due to osteoporosis are common in caged hens, with one study finding that all birds were osteoporotic after a year of confinement. Philip Lymbery, the charity's campaigns director, said: "We urge Europe's politicians to ensure that breakfast in the new millennium involves breaking a free-range egg."

European MPs will vote on a proposal to increase minimum floor space per bird from 450 sq cm (less than a side of A4 paper) to 800 sq cm.

CORRECTION

A report (Media, January 22) wrongly quoted Stuart Smith, who, together with Victoria Greetham, hosted Channel 4 into making a documentary about them, as saying "I get a high out of it, and it keeps me off drugs". In fact Mr Smith said "it's like being on a constant high but without drugs". The error, for which we apologise, arose from wrong information supplied by Channel 4.

Wild boars 'should be eradicated'

By NICK NUTTALL
ENVIRONMENT
CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S wild boars should be eradicated because of the risk they pose to wildlife and public safety, conservation experts said yesterday.

The Game Conservancy Trust, which advises the Government on countryside issues, said there would be a growing risk of people being injured or killed if boars were left to breed unchecked. The trust also gave warning that the animals could damage crops, kill lambs and ground-nesting birds and pass on diseases to free-range pigs. Up to 300 wild boars are at large in Kent, East Sussex and Dorset after escaping from commercial farms. Each female can produce two litters of up to nine piglets each year.

The trust's recommendations came in response to a Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food consultation document published last year. Dr Stephen Tapper, who wrote the trust's Wild Boar Consultation Report, said yesterday: "It would be irresponsible to do nothing... These populations will increase and could get out of hand." He said that trained marksmen should be hired to eradicate the animals, and that tighter controls should be imposed on farms.

Keith Taylor, of the Wild Boar Association, supported the trust's call for eradication. A spokesman for the ministry said that the trust's report echoed recommendations made by the Central Science Laboratory, and that eradication was one option that ministers were studying.

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Spielberg on top of the Globes

Steven Spielberg and his awards for *Saving Private Ryan*

By DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

STEVEN SPIELBERG paid tribute to D-Day veterans as *Saving Private Ryan*, judged to be the most realistic war film ever made, was voted best film and he best director at the Golden Globe awards.

Speaking at the Beverly Hills ceremony on Sunday night, he thanked the veterans who had "saved Western civilisation and stopped the Holocaust in 1945", and had made his film possible.

While Spielberg stole the show for America, Britain was far from outdone: Michael Caine, Sir Tom Stoppard and Lynn Redgrave were among those flying the flag.

Caine, 65, collected the award for best actor in a musical or comedy film for his performance as a sleazy nightclub agent in *Little Voice*.

In his acceptance speech he joked: "What a shock! My career must be slipping. This is the first time I've ever been available to pick up an award." His previous awards include an Oscar for best supporting actor in Woody Allen's 1986 film, *Hannah and Her Sisters*.

According to Stephen Woolley, executive producer of *Li-*



Sean Connery and Michael Caine at a post-awards party

tle Voice, Caine waived his normal star-sized fee. "I'm really pleased for Michael. He worked so incredibly hard. He wasn't being paid a huge Hollywood salary. He just loved the screenplay."

They had worked together on *Mona Lisa* when Caine had lowered his fee to work with Bob Hoskins. He had done so again because of the script and the chance to work with Brenda Blethyn and Jane Horrocks. His instinct had paid off, Mr Woolley said.

The combined writing talents of Sir Tom Stoppard and Marc Norman won the best screenplay award for *Shake-*

speare in *Love*. The American actress Gwyneth Paltrow, who has become an honorary Briton after starring as British characters in both that film and in *Sliding Doors*, won best actress in a comedy film.

She beat off competition from Jane Horrocks, who delivered near-perfect impersonations of Marilyn Monroe and Marlene Dietrich in *Little Voice*.

Lynn Redgrave won the best supporting actress award for *Gods and Monsters*, in which she plays a crusty but loving maid to an ageing horror film director. She said: "It's been 32 years since I stood one of these on a mantelpiece and it's been

crying out for a friend ever since."

Hopes of the award for best actress in a drama going to Britain's Emily Watson, Jacqueline du Pré in *Hilary and Jackie*, were dashed when it was awarded to the Australian Cate Blanchett for her performance in the title role of *Elizabeth*.

Another British hope, Stephen Fry, nominated for his portrayal of Oscar Wilde in *Wilde*, was beaten to the best dramatic actor award by Jim Carrey for *The Truman Show*. Carrey's co-star, Ed Harris, was named best supporting actor.

Jack Nicholson, who in the past has been nominated for 14 Golden Globes and has won five, received the Cecil B. DeMille Award for his "outstanding contribution to the entertainment field".

The awards, which are in their 56th year, are chosen by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and are said to give a good indication as to who will win Oscars two months later. However, *Shakespeare in Love* could be limited to a best screenplay award as neither best comedy nor actress in a comedy feature in the Oscars. Michael Caine's category is also a non-starter.



Gwyneth Paltrow made an emotional acceptance speech

Sarwar's election fraud trial is delayed

By GILLIAN HARRIS
SCOTLAND
CORRESPONDENT

THE trial of Mohammad Sarwar, Britain's first Muslim MP, was adjourned yesterday after a procedural delay.

The MP for Glasgow Govan, who faces charges of electoral fraud and conspiracy to pervert the course of justice, made no comment as he arrived at the High Court in Edinburgh with his wife, Perveen.

The trial, which will begin today before Lady Cosgrove, is expected to last at least six weeks. Witnesses listed to give evidence include the Agriculture Minister, Nick Brown, who as Labour's Chief Whip oversaw the Labour investigation into the allegations against Mr Sarwar which resulted in the MP being suspended from the party.

Alan Johnson, the Labour MP for Hull West, and Jack McConnell, the former general secretary of the Scottish Labour Party, are also expected to give evidence.

Mr Sarwar, 46, of Pollokshields, Glasgow, denies inducing by fraudulent means the electoral registration officer for Glasgow to add the names and addresses of four people to the Govan register in March 1997. He is also charged with breaching the 1983 Representation of the People Act by knowingly making a false declaration about his election expenses.

Mumtaz Hussain, of Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, appeared in court with Mr Sarwar yesterday. He faces one charge of attempting to pervert the course of justice.



Mr Sarwar yesterday: hearing was adjourned

NEWS IN BRIEF

Strike date for meat inspectors

Meat inspectors are to hold a 24-hour strike on February 2 in a dispute over pay and conditions that could disrupt supplies. Unison, their union, said yesterday that it had instructed nearly 1,000 of its members employed as inspectors by the Meat Hygiene Service to stay away from work on that day. Last week 352 inspectors voted for a strike, and 225 against, in a 57 per cent turnout after Unison rejected an imposed 4 per cent pay deal, backdated to last April. The union said that inspectors should have received 4.7 per cent, the same as Ministry of Agriculture staff.

Diver suffocated

A post-mortem examination on Warrant Officer John Rann, 38, serving with the 1st Battalion The Light Infantry in Cyprus, showed that he ran out of air while searching for a lost flipper when diving off Laraca on Sunday.

Scouts found

Four girl Scouts lost in fog for 12 hours on a hike across the Sussex Downs kept up their spirits by singing. The girls, aged 13 and 14, were located in the early hours of yesterday by a helicopter equipped with a heat-sensitive camera.

Larkin's Way

The poet Philip Larkin has had a street named after him in Wellington, Shropshire, which he described as a "hole of toad's turds". He worked in the town's library in the 1940s, saying he "never felt anything but degraded" by the post.

Offer scotched

An offer by Go, the cut-price arm of British Airways, to give any passenger wearing a kilt a free Burns Night flight from Stansted to Edinburgh, flopped. Check-in staff wearing tartan caps had no takers for the 40 seats.

Traffic stopper

A road-safety campaigner has stopped drivers speeding past his home by erecting a poster of the model Eva Herzigova undressing in his front garden. "It worked like a treat as soon as I put it up," said Cyril Long, of Barham, Suffolk.

Gypsies turn road into racecourse

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

GYPSIES who blocked a two-mile stretch of dual carriageway to hold a trotting race were being sought by police yesterday.

About 60 travellers stopped traffic on the A303, near Yeovil, Somerset, at 8am on Sunday and unloaded ponies and traps from a small convoy of vans.

Several races took place before competitors and spectators fled down country lanes, pursued by police. "They drove off with their boot lids up so we could not get the registration numbers," a spokesman for Avon and Somerset

police said. Motorists inundated the police with calls on their mobile phones when they found the westbound carriageway blocked. The spectators were cheering and betting on traps racing between the Podimore roundabout and Ilchester bypass.

The police spokesman said that the departing spectators delayed traffic long enough to allow the riders and carts to escape and then made off through the village of Podimore.

No arrests were made and police investigations are continuing.

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I'm no monster, says Sainsbury

LORD SAINSBURY of Turville, the Minister for Science under attack over his links to research into genetically modified food, hit back at the Tories yesterday by calling them an "anti-business" party.

The Labour peer, who was until 1997 the chairman of the Sainsbury's chain of supermarkets, had been accused of funding experiments in food through a private charitable trust. He claimed the alleged "blatant conflict of interest" was impossible as his personal fortune — estimated at £2 billion — was controlled by a blind trust over whose decisions which he had no say.

The Tories had claimed that Lord Sainsbury had channelled money from the Gatsby Charitable Foundation, which the peer had set up in 1987, to the Sainsbury Laboratory in Norwich to experiment in genetically modified food. The foundation directs £20 million a year to worthy causes.

They also claimed that Lord Sainsbury's position on a Cabinet committee dealing with gene foods policy was a conflict of interest. Lord Sainsbury said: "What the Sainsbury Laboratory does is fundamental research into disease resistance in plants. It isn't re-

Mark Inglefield finds the minister accused over 'Frankenstein foods' ready to rebut the scaremongers

motely of value to Sainsbury's. That would conflict with charity law and a charity cannot personally benefit in any way a person who gives it money."

Lord Sainsbury, 59, would appear to be a very useful person to have in Government. Besides his business expertise, he is passionate about his brief — he even held his last wedding anniversary in the Science Museum — and he is reported to have given new Labour £3 million. But have the accusations that he is in a position to bene-

fit from pushing the Government into allowing "Frankenstein foods" on to supermarket shelves ever made him feel like throwing in the towel?

"Not really," he says. "It's possible area where it might come up is the Cabinet committee, which covers the whole of biotechnology. The committee has only met once and it didn't come up then." He still ap-

points the trustees of the Gatsby foundation, but has a small say in where the money goes.

Lord Sainsbury joined the Labour Party after leaving Cambridge, but as the party drifted further to the left in the 1970s he saw the need for a radical rethink. He joined the SDP in the 1980s. After it merged with the Liberals he devoted his time to Sainsbury's, resurfacing when Tony Blair became Labour leader.

He insists he is no handwagging jumper. "I wrote a Fabian pamphlet in the late 1970s called *Government and Industry: a New Partnership* and basically that was new Labour before its time."

Were you or have you ever been a Socialist?

"Um, I've always been a member of the Labour Party," he says, again smiling.

Lord Sainsbury insists that he would stand aside if he ever felt there was a genuine conflict of interest. "I think it's very important that there aren't conflicts of interest in Government, but having said that I think it's very important that business people do come into politics," he says. He believes the Tories' point-scoring is further proof they are out of touch with modern commerce.



Lord Sainsbury: denied conflict of interest between research at the Sainsbury Laboratory and his role as Science Minister

"When we had Conservative businessmen in government I think the Labour Party accepted the conventions about blind trusts and those sort of issues," he says, "so it's really rather a

shame that they are becoming an anti-business party."

Lord Sainsbury is also keen to point out that his shareholding has been handled correctly. "All my Sainsbury shares

are in a blind trust," he says. On genetic modification of vegetables, or as the tabloids put it, "Frankenstein's 'gub'", he says: "I don't think headlines about Frankenstein tomatoes

really contribute much. There is a serious debate to be had about biodiversity and safety and the more the debate can be kept on those issues the better it will be, I think."

WRITERS PUT NAMES TO CAMPAIGN



Unfair sniping has become a dirty business

Any businessman considering becoming a minister must be having second thoughts. Each of the industrialists who has become a minister has had his business affairs subject to minute, even obsessive, examination and criticism. This goes well beyond maintaining proper standards and raises questions about the type of people we want in politics and government.

Immediately after the election, Lord Simon of Highbury, the former chairman of BP, was criticised over his shares in the company. Then came the long-tunnelling Geoffrey Robinson saga over his offshore trusts and complex business interests. Last summer, the appointment of Lord Macdonald of Tradeston as a Scottish Office minister caused a stir because of his previous position as chairman of Scottish Media Group. This month, Michael Wills, the new small business minister, has been criticised over his television production company, while Lord Sainsbury of Turville has been accused of a conflict of interest between his role as Minister for Science and the holdings in the family supermarket chain.

There is no evidence that any of these ministers abused their position in office. The criticisms of Lord Simon and Mr Wills are based on misunderstandings of the business world. The former was legally constrained about when he could sell his BP shares because of the inside information he had as a recent chairman, while it has taken time for Mr Wills as founder and predominant owner of his company to complete the legal steps to divest himself of his interests. Whatever else may be said about Mr Robinson, there is no evidence he did anything to benefit himself financially. He resigned because his value as a minister had been eroded by cumulative attrition. The odd point has

been the attitude of the Tories. Their desire to get their own back after the over-the-top attacks from Labour before the election is understandable, but short-sighted. Their criticisms of Lord Simon and Lord Sainsbury have struck many in the City and industry as irresponsible and have done nothing for the party's standing with business.

The various Tory businessmen who became ministers followed similar procedures, using blind trusts and standing aside from possible conflicts of interest. Instead of acting like hyperactive investigative journalists, the Tories should be seeking to strengthen procedures to avoid such charges.

The present system is too formal and depends on varying departmental interpretations. As I have argued before, what is needed is an ethics commissioner or office to advise on potential conflicts of interest for ministers, as the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards already does for MPs. The Government is looking into the forthcoming inquiry by the Neill Committee on Standards in Public Life.

The underlying question is whether we want business people to come into politics, which as Lord Sainsbury rightly argues is very important. Businessmen have often struggled to make a mark at the very top, but they have contributed at the medium level, as Lord Simon and Lord Sainsbury now are, by providing private sector insights and a bridge to industry.

The danger is that, otherwise, we will be stuck with more and more full-time career politicians with no outside experience. That is in no one's interests, as Tory spokesmen would discover from talking to Archie Norman, their party's chief executive who, head of Asda, was one of Lord Sainsbury's fiercest rivals.



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Dalya Alberge on legacy of man convinced of his greatness

Around the galleries, page 35



Around the galleries, page 35



By PAUL WILKINSON

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Iraqis claim civilians died in air attack

By MICHAEL THEODOULOU
IN NICOSIA

IRAQI accused American and British military aircraft of firing missiles into residential areas in the southern port city of Basra yesterday. The Iraqis also claimed that several civilians, including women and children, were killed and wounded in the attack.

Britain denied any involvement. Washington confirmed that its warplanes had been in action over the southern no-fly zone after an Iraqi incursion, but said they had attacked air defence systems north of Basra. American aircraft later attacked three separate air defence facilities in the northern no-fly zone after they were tracked by ground radar and came under fire by surface-to-air missiles.

There have been numerous clashes since Iraq declared that it would challenge British and US warplanes in its skies after Operation Desert Fox in December, but yesterday's incidents appeared to mark a serious escalation. Iraq has admitted boosting air defences in the south in the hope of hitting allied aircraft.

A producer for the American television network CNN saw 12 houses destroyed in a poor residential area of Basra. Local officials said 11 people had been killed in the "indis-



criminate and savage" attack. Basra airport and an oilfield had also been hit, they said. In the initial confusion it was unclear whether stray missiles were to blame. Washington said two bombs landed outside their target areas but had no reason to believe they were responsible for civilian casualties. Baghdad's critics in the past have accused Iraqi gunners of shielding behind the civilian population.

The incidents in the no-fly zones, established in the wake of the 1991 Gulf War to protect the Kurdish and Shia communities, came as an isolated Iraq fulminated against the Arab League's decision to issue a resolution critical of Baghdad. Furious state-run Iraqi newspapers said it had provided cover for more American and British attacks instead of condemning last month's Operation Desert Fox.

Tension in the Gulf is expected to mount further today when Iraq's rubber-stamp parliament meets in special session to discuss the issue of Kuwait. The session follows calls from prominent deputies for the Government to withdraw Iraq's 1994 recognition of the tiny emirate because sanctions have not been lifted.

"We could be back to 1990," said one Gulf Arab envoy. "Iraq's attitude is that it has honoured its commitments but the Security Council is refusing to do its job."

President Saddam Hussein accused Kuwait and Saudi Arabia at the weekend of glutting world oil markets to the detriment of other Arab states and the benefit of the Americans. The two countries had handed "America and Zionism knives to pierce Arab nations' with," he said. His remarks echoed Iraq's complaints against Kuwait before the 1990 invasion.

The Iraqi delegation walked out of the stormy Arab League talks in Cairo on Sunday when foreign ministers demanded that Baghdad renounce "provocations" against its neighbours and comply with United Nations resolutions before economic sanctions could be lifted.

The foreign ministers made clear their sympathy for the Iraqi people, but offered none to Saddam's regime. They expressed "sorrow and displeasure" over the military option against Iraq but offered no explicit condemnation of the four-day attacks in December.

Baghdad had demanded that Arab League members bypass the UN and lift sanctions. Muhammad Said al-Sahaf, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, blamed Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria for the tone of the resolution, which newspapers said was drawn up "in advance by the Americans".

"Instead of condemning the US and British aggression against Iraq, these plotters, these corrupt parties and hypocrites blamed Iraq and put the responsibility on it," commented al-Jumhuriya.

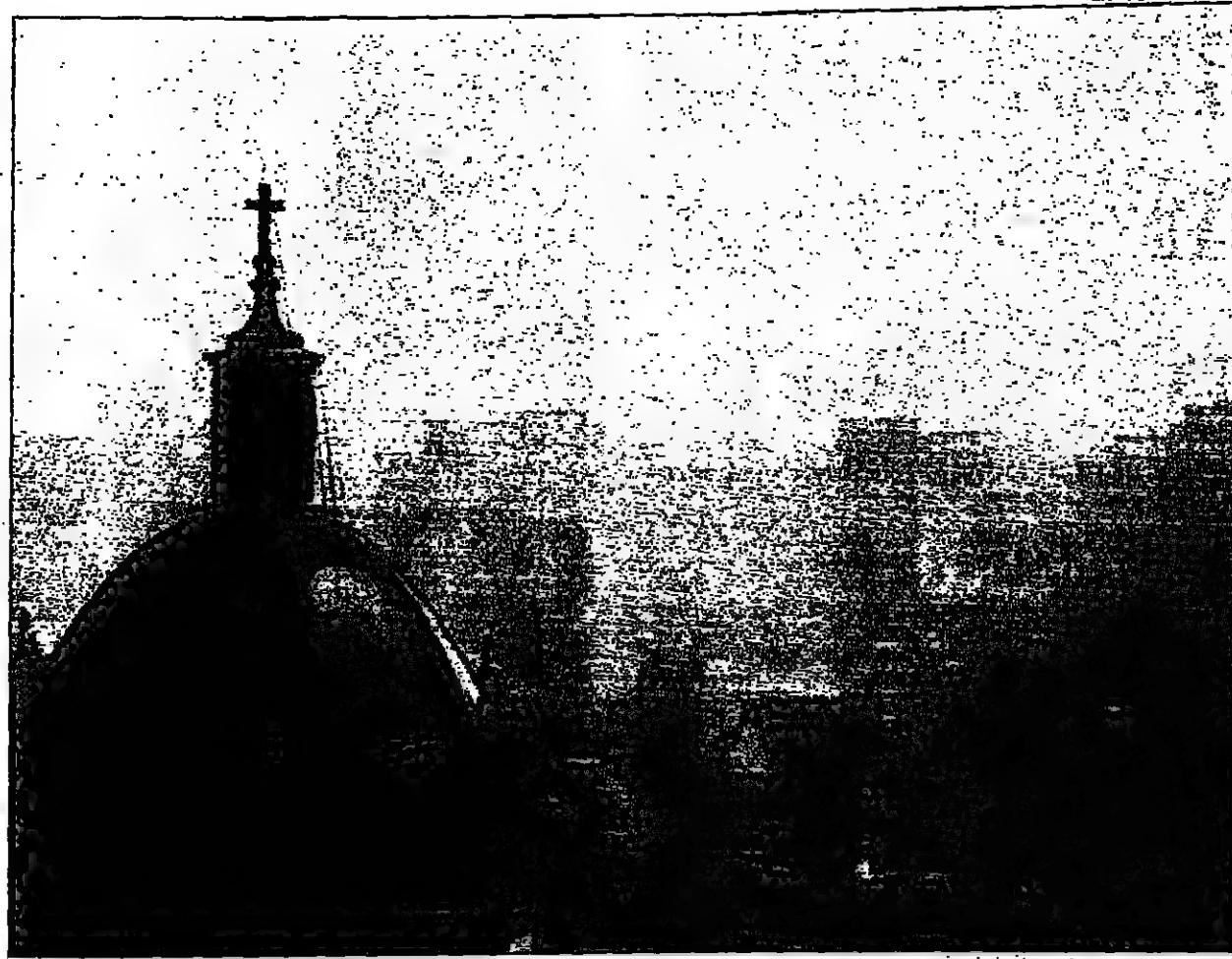
The difference, said Dr Esther Sternberg of the US National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Maryland, lies in how rats respond to stress and the effect it has on their immune systems. Applied to humans, it may help to explain the occasional effectiveness of alternative medicine, or why some people in medical trials get better even when given sugar pills.

FROM NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR
IN ANAHEIM

TWO strains of rats, one calm and the other jumpy, are throwing new light on human diseases.

Although almost identical in other respects, the two strains tend to suffer different diseases. The calm rats develop rheumatoid arthritis, allergic skin diseases, asthma and the rodent equivalent of multiple sclerosis. The nervous rats are far more prone to colds and influenza.

The difference, said Dr Esther Sternberg of the US National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Maryland, lies in how rats respond to stress and the effect it has on their immune systems. Applied to humans, it may help to explain the occasional effectiveness of alternative medicine, or why some people in medical trials get better even when given sugar pills.



A curtain of smog envelops Mexico City — top of the dirty-air league when sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide are included in the cocktail of total atmospheric pollution, according to the World Resources Institute.

Stressed-out rats shed light on how humans fall ill

FROM NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR
IN ANAHEIM

The calm rats, which Dr Sternberg compared to laid-back Californians, respond to stress by pumping out low levels of the stress hormones. One role of these hormones is to control the immune response, the body's mechanism for fighting off infections. If too little is produced, the immune response remains turned up, and may actually damage the body by turning against it, in the autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and MS.

The jumpy rats, which she compared to New Yorkers, have the opposite problem. They produce too much stress hormone, which turns down the immune response so far that they make themselves vulnerable to ordinary infections.

The tight the rats cast on the links between mood and disease were discussed on Sunday at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Anaheim, California.

A WOMAN who laughs uncontrollably when pricked with a needle has illuminated the nature of jokes.

She suffers a particular kind of brain damage which makes a painful experience seem funny, a neurologist from the Centre for Brain and Cognition at the University of California at San Diego told the conference on Sunday.

Dr V.S. Ramachandran

said that jokes provoke laughter because they are nature's false alarm system. "A typical joke takes the listener along a path of expectation, then at the end throws in a punchline which involves a complete reinterpretation of everything that has gone before," he said.

"It is the violation of expectations that makes jokes funny. The reason we laugh is to alert other people that it is a false alarm — what has happened is not a serious threat."

As an example, he cited the traditional slapstick joke of a fat, self-important man slipping on a banana skin. This is funny if he merely loses his

dignity, but if he cracks his skull open on the pavement and bleeds it is not funny, Dr Ramachandran said.

In the case of his patient, who laughed when pricked with a needle, the brain damage lay in the links between the place in the brain where the pain is perceived and the place where that perception is processed in the emotional centres of the brain. "One part of the brain said pain, but the other said it's no big deal. So she laughs," he said.

CHILDREN in the major cities of China and India breathe air so full of pollutant particles that it is equivalent to smoking 40 cigarettes a day, a leading environmentalist claimed yesterday.

Dr Devra Lee Davis of the World Resources Institute, a Washington-based think-tank, said explosive growth of traffic and industry has led to pollution levels far greater than World Health Organisation guidelines.

Of the top ten dirtiest cities, measured by total amounts of particulate matter in the air, nine are in China and one, Rajkot, in India, she said.

When sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide are included, a different picture emerges. Making allowance for the number of children under five living in each city produces a league table in which Mexico City is top, followed by Beijing, Shanghai, Tehran, Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Tianjin, Manila and São Paulo.

Even the OSCE chairman, Knut Vollebæk, the Norwegian Foreign Minister, seems to have distanced himself slightly, saying Mr Walker "reacted emotionally" in the massacre village and that "it would have been cynical and inhuman if he hadn't".

Family of five shot dead in Kosovo hamlet

FROM TOM WALKER
IN BELGRADE

BRITISH monitors in Kosovo yesterday alerted the Serbian police to the deaths of five ethnic Albanians, whose bodies were found shot and burnt on a tractor and its trailer in an area the local authorities said was controlled by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA).

A retired British Army brigadier, Ian Macleod, brought six teams of international monitors to see the bodies in the hamlet of Rakovina, on the road leading from the western town of Djakovica towards Kline.

Sources close to the monitors said the victims were shot with a heavy machinegun on Sunday before their tractor and trailer, laden with corn, caught fire. Two of the dead were children; all were said to be from the same family. There was no confirmation on whether they were refugees.

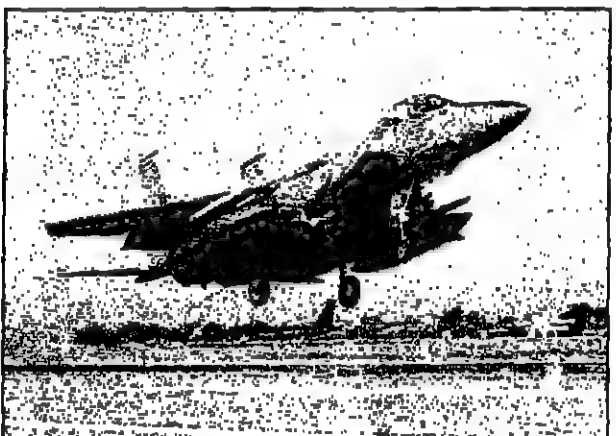
The monitors helped to escort a Serb investigating magistrate to the scene, near the so-called "Ho Chi Minh" trail constructed by the KLA to transport supplies between its central Drenica and western Decane zones of control. The Serb media centre in Pristina claimed there had been no police patrols anywhere near the area for several days.

The incident is the worst in Kosovo since the Racak massacre that claimed 45 Albanian lives ten days ago.

The American envoy, Christopher Hill, met the ethnic Albanian leader, Ibrahim Rugova, in Pristina yesterday to "run-through Contact Group thinking", according to an aide to Mr Hill. There are persistent rumours of a conference in Vienna at which Mr Rugova and political representatives of the KLA would try to find a common voice and an agenda falling short of outright independence.

A spokeswoman for the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), meanwhile, dismissed as "absolute rubbish" reports that the senior international monitor, William Walker, might take an extended period of leave from his duties in Kosovo. Mr Walker is still being denounced by senior figures in the Serbian and Yugoslav Governments, who maintain that he should be expelled from Yugoslavia for his comments on Racak.

Even the OSCE chairman, Knut Vollebæk, the Norwegian Foreign Minister, seems to have distanced himself slightly, saying Mr Walker "reacted emotionally" in the massacre village and that "it would have been cynical and inhuman if he hadn't".



An American F15E Strike Eagle, one of the aircraft involved in clashes over the no-fly zones of Iraq

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'Miracle' as boy survives -50C flight

Paris: Doctors have hailed as a miracle the survival of an adolescent boy who hid in the undercarriage of an aircraft on a flight from Senegal to France (Ben Macintyre writes).

They say that he should have died of cold or suffocation. The boy, who claims to be aged 15 and has not been identified because he is a minor, spent five hours huddled near a wheel in the undercarriage as the aircraft reached an altitude of more than 30,000ft and the temperature dropped to -50C (-58F).

He was discovered, suffering from advanced hypothermia, after the Air Africa Airbus from Dakar landed at Lyons airport a week ago. The boy is now believed to be out of danger.

The Times and
The Royal Institution

Scientists for the new century

IN THE first of a new series of lectures starting tomorrow, Dr Martin Westwell, a chemist from Oxford University, will describe the rise of the superbug. For the first time, modern medicine has no antibiotics with which to fight the most deadly bacteria.

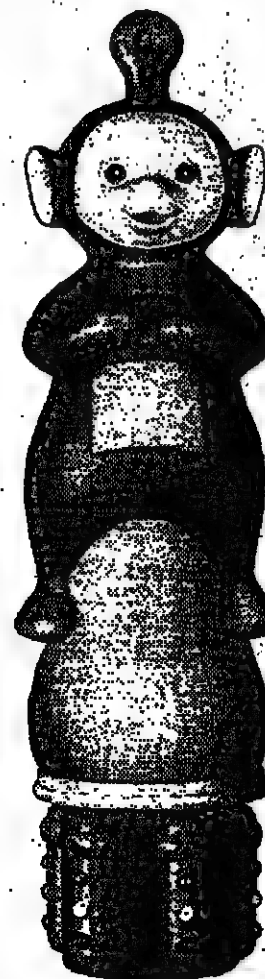
The lecture will be held at 7.30pm at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, 21 Albemarle Street, London, W1X 4BS. For tickets (£5/£3 cones) please call 01753 670 2985. Tickets will be held for collection at the venue on the night.

Leading article, page 19

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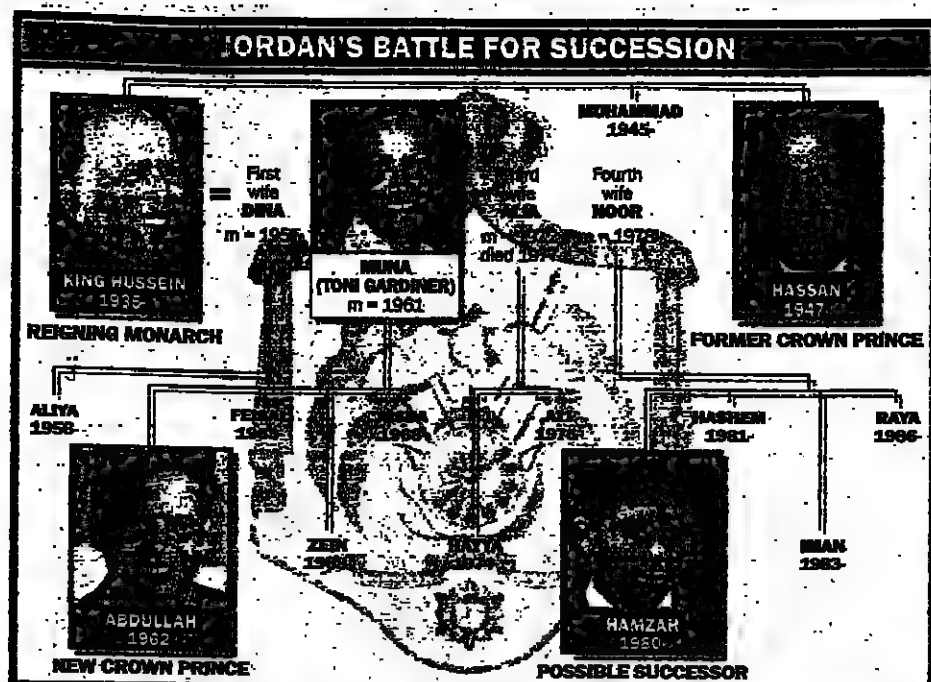
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Hussein plays safe by opting for eldest son

KING HUSSEIN of Jordan has ended days of speculation and confirmed by royal decree that his eldest son, Prince Abdullah, 36, is his heir in place of the King's 51-year-old brother, Prince Hassan, who had held the position of Crown Prince for 34 years.

The decree was signed on Sunday night after a spate of rumours that under the influence of his American-born fourth and current wife, Queen Noor, the King might have passed the succession to their son, Prince Hamzah, who is still a teenager.

Many senior Jordanian politicians had given a warning that such a move could provoke unrest. Toujan Faisal, Jordan's only woman MP until her defeat in last year's election, said: "Hamzah would have suffered the same fate as Faisal [Hussein's cousin, murdered when King of Iraq in 1958] because the people would have seen his promotion as a blatant unfair and a sign that behind the scenes the Americans were trying to run our country."

Mrs Faisal, who sat as an opposition independent in the lower house of Parliament, added: "After the plan was floated, the King saw it would be too risky to take the Hamzah option. Instead he opted for the much safer move of switching the succession back to Abdullah. But there are still many Jordanians who resent the way that Hassan has been dealt with."

Some officials said that Prince Hassan had taken the news "like a soldier" and immediately backed the move.

King's decision strengthens the English link, Christopher Walker writes

while others claimed he had sought permission to take a holiday abroad and was seriously considering leaving the country. Most senior aides dismissed this suggestion.

The reappointment of Prince Abdullah to the role he held briefly in the early 1960s as a toddler has revived traditional British influence in Jordan. His English-born mother, Princess Muna (née Toni Gardiner), is an occasional visitor to Amman, and the Prince himself served happily for a time in the British Army in Britain and West Germany. As both Princes—Abdullah and Hamzah—had foreign-born mothers who converted to Islam, the "Crown Prince's" background was described in royal

circles as no longer seen as a bar to his succession to the throne that Hussein took over 47 years ago at the age of 17.

Senior politicians said that the King's encounter with his own mortality during his second major cancer scare in only seven years had prompted him to move quickly to restore the Hashemite monarchy's succession to a son who would carry on his own legacy.

For months, Amman had been plagued with rumours about different sons being favoured, speculation that was fuelled when the King was perceived as taking an action or expressing a sentiment in support of one or other of them.

Palace sources said the King had wavered briefly before signing the historic decree replacing his younger, Oxford-educated brother who had been his close confidant and had repeatedly acted as regent since his appointment in 1965, a time when the King feared early death from assassination and an end to the Hashemite line.

Last night politicians said that he was concerned that, despite perceived blunders during the past six months, his brother should be given a graceful dismissal to ensure that his removal did not cause future dissent in the family ranks. They claimed that the monarch, who has a reputation of acting magnanimously towards even his bitterest political enemies, might be planning to appoint him as his deputy in economic areas and the Middle East peace process—areas to which Prince Hassan has devoted his working life.

Down-to-earth blonde who won royal heart

By Christopher Walker

KING Hussein of Jordan's decision to reappoint his eldest son, Prince Abdullah, as heir has propelled back to the limelight one of the most unlikely and unassuming Englishwomen ever to play a major role in Middle East affairs.

When Toni Gardiner, then 19, became the King's second wife in 1961 it appeared like a fairytale romance for the blonde, down-to-earth girl who had met her husband-to-be when a young RAF officer took her Scottish dancing at the King's house at Shuneh, beside the Dead Sea.

The daughter of Lieutenant-Colonel Walker Gardiner, an officer who had stayed in Jordan after the British Training Mission was broken up in 1959, Ms Gardiner became a Muslim, a Jordanian citizen and took the name Muna al-Hussein (Hussein's Delight).

The King's first wife had been the Cambridge-educated Queen Dina. But with Ms Gardiner he seemed to have found the ideal partner, although some leading Jordanians had reservations about the offspring of a converted Muslim and English-born woman ever succeeding to the Hashemite throne.

"Toni was a vivacious outdoors girl with simple tastes and no intellectual pretensions," wrote Roland Dallas, the King's biographer. "She was pretty, charming and the same height as the King."

"Like Hussein, she enjoyed riding, swimming, dancing and parties... She could not drive, and Hussein took delight in teaching her. They went go-karting together."

The King wrote in his autobiography: "For the first time in my life, here was a girl who took an interest in me as a human being and not a King." The marriage lasted until 1972, during which time the Princess (she did not wish to be called Queen) bore the King four children, two boys and two girls, of which the eldest was Abdullah, born on January 30, 1962.

He was briefly created Crown Prince until King Hussein, unnerved by several assassination attempts, altered the succession in favour of his

brother, Prince Hassan, 51, who was unceremoniously stripped of the role last week.

Despite a divorce soon after the King's eye lighted on Alia Toukan, a beautiful member of a Palestinian family with deep roots in the West Bank city of Nablus (who, as Queen Alia, was to be killed in a helicopter crash), Muna has remained a respected figure.

"She behaved with great dignity, turning down many other proposals of marriage and never speaking out bitterly about the divorce," a senior Palestinian journalist said yesterday. "She moved abroad, but has been back to Amman many times for family events like the birth of grandchildren, and remains one of the most-loved members of the Royal Family."

British diplomats are cock-a-hoop that the King has set-

'She behaved with great dignity, never speaking bitterly of the divorce'

led for an heir with English roots rather than his favourite son, Prince Hamzah, 19, the eldest son of his fourth and present marriage to the American-born Queen Noor.

"There is no doubt that the Americans were plumping for Hamzah, hoping their influence on Jordan's future would rise proportionately," said a prominent Amman banker. Palace sources said that the King had eventually alighted on Abdullah because of his senior army role and his realisation of the bitterness—and possible violence—that the irregular promotion of Hamzah would provoke.

Abdullah has strong support in the tribally dominated armed forces and strong links with the Palestinians, who make up over 60 per cent of Jordan's population, via his wife Rania, from the West Bank town of Tulkarm.



The chosen one: Top, Prince Abdullah and brother Faisal with Muna, their mother; left, the Prince's parents on their wedding day in 1961; right, the Prince on parade

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Mercenaries' rage kindled by atrocities

AS Sierra Leone's rebels continue to murder priests and missionaries, and amputate the limbs of civilians left in their mercy, battle-hardened mercenaries are vowing their willingness to "do the job for nothing" — just to finish the rebels.

Fred Marafono MBE, a former warrant officer with the SAS, is now a mercenary for the Government. Aged 58 and a veteran of British campaigns in Oman, Borneo and Northern Ireland and scores of covert operations which took him from Mexico to South Africa, Mr Marafono should have hung up his gun years ago.

He is of Fijian origin, and on retiring from the SAS after 28 years said he could not face "just sitting about". He joined Executive Outcomes, a South African company offering mercenary services, to fight for the Sierra Leone Government against Revolutionary United Front rebels in 1994.

Often unpaid, their lives at risk, the men of Executive Outcomes lost their contracts with the election of President Kabbah. But Mr Marafono stayed on, contracted directly to Ecomog, the Nigerian-led West African peacekeeping force fight-

Sierra Leone's rebels violate even the rough code of African conflicts, writes Sam Kiley

ing the rebels. Ecomog officers admit that they would have lost Freetown last month without Mr Marafono and his comrades — "Juba" Joubert and Neil Ellis, both South Africans, and their Ethiopian engineer, Sindaba. They are the crew of "Bokkie", a Mil17 helicopter flying seven hours a day to resupply soldiers and give support from the air against anti-aircraft guns used to terrifying effect on West African Infantry.

"Without these guys, we would have run out of food and ammo and fled the front. They are amazingly brave. I know they do it for money, but I wouldn't do it for anything," said a Nigerian lieutenant-colonel, himself a veteran.

As a crew, providing the services of Bokkie, they earn

about \$2,000 (£1,235) an hour — when the money is paid. At the moment, the Bokkie crew are owed for seven months' flying. But memories of recent scenes at Freetown's Connaught Hospital, and the cold-blooded murder of Catholic priests and nuns by the rebels, keep them here. Killers themselves, they have no qualms about dispatching hundreds of their enemies in a hail of fire.

"I love it, it's fantastic," Mr Ellis said about letting loose a "brief burst" from Bokkie's machineguns. He is a veteran of the apartheid-era South African special forces. But the atrocities in Sierra Leone have also brought out the humanity behind the armoured shells of these soldiers of fortune.

"There is nothing in the world that can justify what is happening here. There is no way we can give up on these people. They are my people now. I am one with them," Mr Marafono said.

Jean-Jacques Fuentes, a former pilot with the French special forces, and "Matthew" his co-pilot, who fly reconnaissance missions for Ecomog, have also clearly been horrified by what they have seen in Sierra Leone.

They recently met Lamen Jusa Jaka, a teacher, who sat on the floor in a corridor of the Connaught Hospital, pointing the bloody stumps of what used to be his hands at the heavens.

"I begged them not to do it. I begged them," Mr Jaka said. "But I knew it was no use. I just looked to the sky when they brought the axe down on my wrists. They seemed to be enjoying themselves."

Someone dropped some drugs into a pocket he will never be able to use again and told him to go home.

"Home? Home? Where is home? It is a pile of ashes. I have nothing. I cannot ever scratch myself again, or blow



A girl whose hands have been cut off waits for treatment at Freetown's Connaught hospital, which has been filled with patients mutilated by Sierra Leone's rebels

my nose, write, dig — I am finished." He shuffled off, carrying his arms at right angles to the ground.

Mr Fuentes said: "I can't take any more of this. I really can't. After this job, I'm going to quit. I promise."

Himself a veteran who has fought for Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire and Denis Sassou-Nguesso in Congo-Brazzaville, he added: "I don't like it one bit — being made to feel human again because

some child has had her hands chopped off."

Journalists seized: Two European journalists were abducted yesterday by Sierra Leone rebels, who later told one of them to deliver a demand to the authorities.

Patrick Saint Paul of the Paris daily, *Le Figaro*, told reporters that he and Javier Espinosa, of the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo*, were seized at Rukupa, near Wellington, an

eastern suburb of the capital, Freetown.

The rebels headed with the two into the nearby bush where they later released M Saint Paul. The Frenchman said the rebels had ordered him to pass on their demand for negotiations with the Nigerian-led Ecomog forces.

They said they would not release Señor Espinosa until their demand was broadcast on radio. (Reuters)

WORLD IN BRIEF

More Christians attacked in India

Lucknow: Officials in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh said yesterday that five Christian missionaries were beaten up, a day after an Australian missionary and his two sons were burnt alive by a mob of Hindu zealots. The latest victims of a rash of attacks on the country's minority Christian community occurred on the banks of the River Ganges in Allahabad.

N. Ravi Shankar, the state's Home Secretary, said the five Christians belonged to a missionary organisation called "Faith in Jesus" from Kerala state, where 23 per cent of the population is Christian. The victims were said to have been handing out pamphlets. (Reuters) Leading article, page 19

Ice fishermen safe

Moscow: Nearly 400 fishermen stranded on ice-floes and swept out to sea off the island of Sakhalin in Russia's Far East returned to land safely. The floes broke away from the coast and drifted for about an hour before the current pulled them back towards the shoreline at Cape Lesnoy, Moscow's Echo Radio reported. Ice fishing, on frozen lakes or rivers, is a winter tradition in Russia, drawing dozens and sometimes hundreds of fishermen to holes drilled in the ice. (AFP)

BA man escapes trial

Fairfax, Virginia: A British Airways flight attendant avoided a trial here by pleading no contest, admitting he had been guilty to assault and battery charges in a colleague's alleged rape. Julian Henry, 47, of Pulborough, West Sussex, was fined \$1,000 (£600) for the attack in a hotel room. The prosecutor dropped rape and sexual assault charges in exchange for the plea. The victim, 45, alleged that Henry raped her after several hours' drinking at the hotel. (AP)

Stolen Uccello found

Chambéry: Police officers patrolling a parking lot in Aix-les-Bains, southeast France, stumbled on a stolen painting by the Renaissance Florentine artist Paolo Uccello. The 15th-century oil portrait of *Unknown Man*, stolen from the Chambéry Museum this month, was found propped up against a bush on Sunday. The museum curator said the thieves were probably unorganised and became scared. (AFP)

Nuclear verdict delayed

Bonn: Germany's plan to abandon nuclear power hit a snag when the Government announced it had put off a controversial decision on banning exports of spent nuclear fuel. Gerhard Schröder, the Chancellor, right, was concerned that Germany would have to pay compensation if it scrapped reprocessing deals with French and British plants, a government spokesman said. About one third of German electricity is supplied by nuclear power. (AP)



Newspaper chief freed

Harare: Police yesterday released Clive Wilson, the proprietor of *The Standard*, after detaining him for three days over the newspaper's report of an alleged conspiracy to overthrow President Mugabe (Ian Raath writes). Mr Wilson, 62, said he had not been subjected to any ill-treatment by his captors; unlike the editor, Mark Chavunduka, and a reporter, Ray Choto, who were tortured by military and secret police.

90-year-old's fiftieth

Riyadh: A Saudi villager over 90 years old has taken a 13-year-old for his fiftieth birthday. The man from the Jazan region in the south of the kingdom has about 50 children ranging from 12 to 65 years old. It is assumed that the villager, who lives on a diet of dates and yoghurt, must have divorced dozens of women, because Islam allows a Muslim to have a maximum of four wives at any one time. (AFP)



Fred Marafono, a former SAS man, now fighting as a mercenary for the Government in Freetown

Plea to Mandela as gunmen kill another party official

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

AN urgent meeting with President Mandela was being sought yesterday by leaders of South Africa's United Democratic Movement (UDM) following the murder of a second party official.

Roelf Meyer, the party's deputy president, said talks with Mr Mandela — who has postponed visits to Uganda, Switzerland and Germany

that he was scheduled to begin yesterday — about the killings were imperative.

Police said they were not ruling out a link between the latest murder outside Cape Town and the deaths of 11 people in an attack by gunmen on a funeral vigil at Richmond in KwaZulu-Natal province, hundreds of miles away, on Saturday night.

The murdered mourners were supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) in an area of South

Africa where thousands of people have been murdered for their political allegiances.

The attack came only hours after Sifiso Nkabinde, Secretary-General of the UDM and a former ANC warlord, died in a hail of bullets fired at his car in the centre of Richmond.

More than 1,000 police and troops are patrolling the Richmond area amid rising concern that political violence could erupt there and in

other parts of South Africa in the run-up to the country's second democratic general election in a few months' time.

Validela Matiyase, deputy chairman of the UDM in the Western Cape province, was shot dead when he was called to the front door of his home in the Samora Machel informal settlement outside Philippi, near Cape Town, at dusk on Sunday. Police said two gunmen fired four shots at him.

The UDM was formed in 1997 by Mr Meyer, a former National Party minister who was its chief negotiator in constitutional talks with the ANC and Bantu Holomisa, a one-time, black homeland leader, after his expulsion from the ANC.

The party is claiming big gains in support in the Western Cape province, where the ANC is mounting a fierce campaign to win control from the National Party at the election.

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The agony of psoriasis

Katherine Duncan-Jones has defeated the virulent condition that made her hands and feet bleed

At the end of August 1996 both my daughters left home to take up graduate scholarships in America. I knew that they would probably never again spend extended periods in my house, but persuaded myself that I had "coping strategies" well in place. Within days of their departure, I embarked on a more than usually expensive holiday, a Hellenic cruise. I calculated that during the course of this holiday I would become really keen to get back, even to an empty home, and to resume my absorbing work on Shakespeare's *Sonnets*.

This was indeed the case, and I returned to much enjoyable busy-ness, not consciously marred by what I took to be a moderately virulent outbreak of athlete's foot caused by too many visits to my swimming club in a prep school, where term began in early September. After a week or three I went to my GP and told her I thought I had athlete's foot. Amid pleasant chat of this and that, she sat at her computer and prescribed some antifungal cream. I warned one or two fellow members of the swimming club that there might be infections around in the women's changing room, used at other times of day by "away" rugby teams of little boys.

My spirits were slightly dampened, as autumn and a new academic year set in, by a sense that as a responsible citizen I should cease to visit the swimming pool. I normally went three times a week — for fear of infecting others. I hit on what I thought a rather brilliant solution: I bought rubber foot coverings and went swimming in them a couple of times, hoping to avoid passing the infection on, but was surprised to discover what a part toes play in swimming, and how impeding it is to have the feet encased in latex. Perhaps this experience gave me some empathy with the condom-wearing sex.

The only real solution seemed to be to abandon swimming, especially since the athlete's foot was, if anything, more virulent, despite a second instalment of antifungal cream, and had now spread to the right foot as well. I also noticed that, immersed in the morning paper, I seemed clumsily to have cut some flaps of skin loose on the palm of my right hand while peeling my apple and pear with a sharp knife at breakfast. However, being extremely busy, as October and November advanced, with teaching, lecturing and writing the introduction to my edition of the *Sonnets*, I didn't devote much thought to any of this, though I did buy lots of hypoallergenic plasters to keep my cracking and bleeding soles more or less in one piece. My morning and bedtime routines — peeling off the day's plasters and applying a fresh set, with what seemed like great cardboard-like ruffs of skin coming off — became increasingly disgusting.

My doctor changed her tune, and decided that either it never had been athlete's foot or that the athlete's foot was second-



Katherine Duncan-Jones: "I kept thinking of the Little Mermaid, who was permitted to exchange her fish-tail for legs at the price of feeling that she was treading on knives"

ary to some other skin problem. She set things in train for an appointment with an NHS dermatologist, although she was fairly sure that what I had would eventually be diagnosed as "acute dermatitis" — doctors' Greek for bad skin trouble.

She recommended that I wear cork insoles. With terrifying speed, lacking my habitual exercise, I became alarmingly lame and unfit. I kept thinking of Hans Christian Andersen's *Little Mermaid*, who was permitted to exchange her fish-tail for human legs only at the price of feeling that with every step she was treading on knives. Normally an early riser, I took to lying in bed in a state of acute apprehension, dreading the pain when I put my bleeding feet to the floor, and not at all

sure I could face the small amount of walking required to get me downstairs, and to work. After a few minutes I usually became injured to the pain, especially once I had strapped up my cracked, bleeding feet with rolls of the sticking plaster I was now using, but I did make careful calculations of the least amount of walking I could get away with, and became quite stressed if I had to walk any farther. Meanwhile, the skin on my hands was flapping off in large pieces, and I dreaded meeting anyone who might shake my hand and feel its horny edges. My hands, like my feet, were now so cracked at the centre of the palm that sometimes they bled slightly. I began jokingly to refer to the condition as "my stigmata", adding

that whatever had caused it, it certainly couldn't be starchy.

By December I was tottering from foot to foot in pain. My left foot was still the worse, however, and my doctor alarmed me with a bit of medical humour, saying: "We don't want you to lose it." She prescribed powerful steroid cream — across-the-counter stuff had done little — and suggested that I wrap my hands and feet in plastic bags. I was glad that I had no current bed companion to see or feel my wrapped extremities. My elder daughter, back for Christmas, fell about laughing at the sight of my nocturnal plastications. Sometimes I kept my feet wrapped and anointed during the day as well as at night, concealed with socks and trousers,

and hoped that no one would see the bulging at my ankles or hear the occasional surrenders of the plastic. By mid-December, when I went to give a lecture in Switzerland, I had become a steroid junkie.

I was embarrassed, in a nice Swiss hotel room, to find no way of dressing and undressing without scattering heaps of dead skin on the carpet. In the new year, I tried to cut down on the steroids. My feet were ever so slightly better, my hands a lot worse, but there was no doubt that all four extremities were madly and painfully exfoliating all the time. Night after night, in a warm bath, I would try to rub them clear of dead skin flaps, hoping they would be nice and soft the next day, but new flaps and cracks appeared in no time. Finally,

in March, I saw the dermatologist, and hand and foot psoriasis was diagnosed — a condition rare enough to be unfamiliar to many GPs, but common enough for the Oxfordshire Health Authority to have invested in ultraviolet light boxes for treatment of the condition. During the summer of 1997, I had a 12-week series of sessions with ultraviolet light and this treatment, combined with a continual applying of moisturising and emollient creams, brought my feet, at least, to a better condition than they had been in for years.

The connection between mind, consciousness and body is notoriously intimate and inscrutable. In *Pier of Clay* (1996), Anthony Storr traces a recurring pattern of events in which an individual who has undergone severe illness or depression emerges from it convinced that he can now impart spiritual insight and detailed guidance to mankind in how life should be lived. Many celebrated "gurus" such as St Ignatius, Jung and Gurdjieff have undergone such mind-changing illnesses, and have persuaded large numbers of followers of the universal value of the insights they gained during them.

In my case, the pattern of events has been reversed: I have been led to rationalism rather than mysticism. I am less certain than ever that I have any belief of my own, let alone anything of value to impart to others. Rather than being, like St Paul, that "I know that I bear in my own body the marks of the Lord Jesus", I now meditate with sympathy but considerable cynicism on the agonising lives of such celebrated stigmatics as St Paul or Padre Pio. Spending long periods in dark cells meditating on one's own sin and unworthiness in the sight of the Almighty must be the perfect recipe for exacerbating psoriasis, a stress-related disorder of the immune system that is aggravated by lack of sunlight. Another set where psoriatic patches can break out badly is round the midriff, leading to "the in the side" wounds. For a short time in October 1996, I had this symptom, too.

Until 1997 I was a regular churchgoer. Despite a strong inclination towards pantheism, I felt myself to be sustained and nourished at some deep level by Christian ritual and worship. Since more often is covering from psoriasis, I find that whatever frail thread it was that connected me with institutional religion has snapped. As an Anglican I had never been required to take such saintly miracles as the stigmata particularly seriously. Still, the close parallels between this form of psoriasis and Christ's wounds might have led me to a deeper faith, in practice, I find that my healed and anointed feet no longer carry me into places of worship.

● This is an edited version of an article that first appeared in *The London Review of Books*.

I am not mad, touch wood

Molly Passmore is a perfectly intelligent woman, the family breadwinner and mother of two small children. Every time she gets into her car she has to touch wood, inside her head at least, to ensure a safe journey. "It is a particular piece of wood, in a particular place, on a certain Welsh mountainside," the media professional explains.

"I have not only to touch it, mentally, but get the feel of the wood under my fingertips right. Sometimes this involves going over it several times. If I have a passenger I can't talk to them till I've done it — hopefully, they just think I'm a bit distracted. Other times the kids ask 'When are we going to move, Mum?' I can hardly tell them their mother is a complete nutter who's busy touching wood in her head so that we don't have an accident."

Jenny Charles, a solicitor, pats doors three times — just under the handle, with her right hand, after closing them — which can be a bit of a trial when there are clients in the room. "I stand so I'm hiding the door while I do it and just hope they don't notice," she says. "A couple of times I have

Obsessive behaviour is often just a means of relieving stress, as Miranda Ingram discovers



tried not doing it but I can't concentrate on my work, or what they are saying, and have to make an excuse to go in and out of the door again and do it properly."

Nadine Wild also pats, but it is drawers for her. "Even when they are obviously closed, I have to pat them until they feel closed," she says. "It's completely crazy."

Wild, an academic at the top of her profession, also has to

step over joins in the carpet, with the correct foot forward, or go back and do it again if she doesn't get it right. Now she has started on taps. "It's definitely getting worse as I'm getting older," Wild says. "Now I have to put a hand on each tap and twist until they turn off fully in symmetry. And I have to turn locks in doors numerous times until the click feels right. It drives my husband crazy. He says it's

spooky having this apparently intelligent woman endlessly clicking all the locks at night."

In all cases, the women agree that while the obsessions are irritating, they dare not fail to do them: doom will surely follow if the ritual is not observed. "It drives me mad that I'm doing it," says Passmore, "but I don't risk not doing it. What if we had a crash?"

Wild cannot risk abandoning the lock ritual, but was horrified recently to catch her four-year-old son patting drawers. "I couldn't bear it when I saw his little hands following the same absurd pattern as mine. I thought 'God, what have I done? I've turned him crazy, too!'"

Crazy or certifiable? Scratch the surface and almost everyone seems to have a private obsession: sipping drinks to the count of three, tapping a boiled egg seven times, lining up pens and pencils in a certain order, or stepping on and off the footpath before crossing. Should we be worried? Is this the first step into the asylum?

"Not at all," says Professor Peter Fonagy, of the department of psychoanalysis at University College London. "Firstly this sort of behaviour, which is extremely widespread and not restricted to women, is quite separate from full-blown compulsive obsessive disorder, which is a very serious illness. It is to do with your personality type, mostly, and to a certain extent with your social inheritance — background."

Certainly the women interviewed by *The Times* recalled watching similar behaviour in their parents — obsessive tidiness, lining up the salt and pepper — and see it also in their siblings.

"On a certain level we are all like children," Fonagy says. "It is a state called magical phantasmagoria whereby you believe that if you do X then Y will happen, even if you know perfectly well, intellectually, that there is no connection."

"Like standing on the platform trying to will the next train to be the Richmond train. You think that if you look at the board in the right way for the right length of time you can make the next train be the right train. Children have this very powerfully and perfectly normally, and most of us, when we are under a lot of stress, revert to childish ways of thinking."

"I had an undergraduate patient who sincerely believed that he would do OK in his finals as long as he didn't change his underwear in the three weeks running up to the exams, even though he knew perfectly well that the state of his underwear couldn't possibly influence questions set weeks before."

"When we are frightened or nervous we quite often start to believe in trivial things. This sort of behaviour is analogous to superstition, or carrying mascots, for example. Each person has to find their own way of coping — one person might fidget, another develops a phobia and a third feels sick."

If you are the personality type lined up for repetitive lock-turning then that is just the way you cope, he says, even if it might not be the most efficient solution. It gets worse when there is an area of your life that you feel you are not fully in control of or coping with. Patting the door gives you the comfort of being in control of something.

"If you're going through a particularly obsessive patch," Fonagy says, "it is probably a message to yourself that an area of your life needs sorting out — you're postponing a decision, your elderly mother is getting you down, you've got problems at work. Stop worrying about the obsession itself and look at the rest of your life."

He says that indulging in secret door-patting or tap-turning rituals does not mean you are either more, or less, likely than anyone else to develop a serious clinical disorder. "In fact," Fonagy concludes, "people who behave like this are usually pretty sound people — good at their work, reliable and conscientious."

When a nosebleed becomes a danger

KINGS LYNN in Norfolk was Royalist in the Civil War, and the local people seem never to have lost this tendency. They delight in welcoming the Royal Family when they are installed at Sandringham and have a particular affection for Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, dating from when King George VI was alive and the Royal Family spent so much time there together.

It is a pity, therefore, that her new year visits seem to coincide with the occasional medical emergency. This time last year, the Queen Mother fractured her femur while visiting the stables; this year she has had a severe nosebleed, which needed attention at the local NHS hospital.

A nosebleed, or epistaxis "as we doctors call it" (to use Private Eye's phraseology), does not sound very sinister and is not in the same league as the repair of a fractured femur. However, a nosebleed, particularly in an older person, can be a true medical emergency. Stopping it may require the presence of an experienced ear, nose and throat surgeon and also, on occasion, a skilled radiologist to find the bleeding point.

Most nosebleeds, such as those suffered by young children through the tiffs and bangs of playground life or too much exploration with their fingers (known medically as epistaxis digitorum), are easy to stop. The sufferer should sit upright with the head inclined slightly forward, and grasp the nose between finger and thumb at the junction of the soft and hard parts. Squeezing the nose at this point compresses Kiesselbach's plexus of blood vessels, which are situated in Little's area (Kiesselbach and Little were 19th-century surgeons). The pressure should be maintained for at least ten minutes. When it is released, in most cases bleeding will have stopped.

If this first-aid measure does not work the anterior portion of the nose may have to be packed with gauze. This presents no great problem. In my youth, one-inch gauze ribbon saturated with BIPP (bismuth, iodoform and paraffin paste) — devised by Lord Lister and later used in the First World War for packing

wounds — could be left in position for hours or even days without becoming unpleasant. Usually, this stanching the bleeding. More recently films of an expanding foam, Microcel, are inserted into the nose. This absorbs the blood, expands and exerts pressure on any of the bleeding Kiesselbach's vessels. If this is unsuccessful, the bleeding point may be cauterised.

Malcolm Keene, a consultant ear, nose and throat surgeon at St Bartholomew's Hospital, says that the method of treating nosebleeds is determined by their severity.

MEDICINE CHEST
DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

Most can be dealt with by a first-aid worker, the next stage up needs a doctor and the worst nosebleeds can pose quite a problem for the most experienced surgeon. In particular, nosebleeds in older people who have arteriosclerosis — hardening of the arteries — can cause difficulties.

The older the patient, the more likely is the nosebleed to be torrential — and once it is torrential, finding the source of the torrent requires considerable skill. In older patients, too, the blood is likely to come from a long way back in the nose and is often the result of the rupture of a branch of the sphenopalatine artery, particularly if the patient's arteries are hardened and weakened.

by age and the blood pressure is raised.

The elderly, too, frequently take aspirin or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs to counteract arthritis. These drugs also make bleeding more profuse. Many of us like to think that the Queen Mother's remarkable resilience and intellectual sharpness are part a result of the recognition of the advantages of alcohol in moderation — unfortunately, however, useful this is in stopping the blood clotting in the coronary arteries, it may also "increase" a tendency to bleed.

Bleeding from the back of the nose from a ruptured branch of the sphenopalatine artery will probably need specialist attention. Only when people remember the "nose trick" — the splinting of a drink through the nose when choking or laughing — do they remember the connection between nose and mouth. In the past a gauze pad was introduced through the mouth and pulled into position at the back of the nose. Now an expandable balloon, such as is found on a Foley's catheter, is introduced in the same way. Once the balloon is in position, it is inflated with air and when the pressure of the balloon is greater than the blood pressure, bleeding from the artery stops. Rarely, a major artery needs tying.

Two warnings: a persistent, watery, bloodstained discharge from one nostril may be an early sign of a nasal tumour and needs expert investigation. Also, patients with recurrent nosebleeds should have a blood count to include haematological diseases.

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Most of us will at some time end up stealing from our employers. **Jon Ashworth** reports on how we have become a nation of petty criminals

Faced with the evidence, employers are starting to clamp down. Legislation aimed at protecting whistleblowers at work seems certain to speed the process. Employees who regularly work late and never take holidays may commander suspicion.

The weakening UK economy will hasten the process; because fraudsters find it harder to cover their tracks as companies tighten procedures. The perpetrators panic and take bigger risks. Weak controls and management indifference have enabled fraud at

David Sherwin, head of fraud investigations at Ernst & Young, says: "Once an employee has won the trust of senior management they

Most frauds are uncovered because someone speaks out, but fear or recrimination puts



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EYTracer then downloaded 600,000 transactions going back six years. Within a day, the search had been narrowed down to one account. By the end of the week, they had cracked the fraud. An employee had set up a bogus supplier, paying out cheques, assuming that no one would notice.

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CHRISTIANS IN PERIL

Burnings, murder and the new intolerance of Asia

Mahatma Gandhi expected the India of his dreams "to be wholly tolerant, with its religious working side by side with one another." For India's Christians, those expectations have been brutally betrayed since last March, when the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) formed a new Indian Government. The mob murder in Orissa at the weekend of the Australian evangelical missionary Graham Staines, incinerated in his car with his two young sons by Hindu extremists, brought to 109 the recorded acts of violence against Christians in ten months. That compares with 50 in the entire half-century since independence.

Attempts to invoke Gandhi's spirit of tolerance by India's Christian leaders, who last month led tens of thousands in a day of protest at the Jamuna River where Gandhi was cremated, have been pathetically ineffective against an orchestrated campaign by extremists affiliated to the BJP. In Gujarat, Christian appeals for official protection after dozens of assaults were answered by a renewed Christmas outbreak of church-burnings, forced "purification ceremonies", attacks on priests and nuns and the stoning of schools. Yesterday, even as India's leaders condemned the Staines murder and thousands flocked to the funeral, five other Christian missionaries were viciously beaten in Allahabad in an attack applauded by the Bajrang Dal, the militants behind the Staines murder.

India's Christians are not alone in experiencing a great upsurge of intolerance and violence. In China and Vietnam, persecution is ideologically driven; but from Pakistan to Nepal and Indonesia, Asian Christians are under assault as they have not been in living memory. What is puzzling is why they should be singled out.

These are minority communities so tiny that they cannot by definition pose any threat to national cohesion or majority beliefs. India's 23 million are only 2.6 per cent of the population. In Pakistan, where justice for Christians is now virtually

non-existent and police have deliberately exposed Christians to danger in some areas by ordering them to identify their houses with crosses, much as Nazi Germany instituted the yellow star for Jews, they number only three million, mostly desperately poor. In Indonesia, where the situation is more complex because many are also Chinese, Christians have more protection; the military has, in most cases, made serious efforts to quell Muslim-Christian riots like those which have just gutted the eastern town of Ambon. But in India, the Government stands accused, by moderate Hindus as well as Christians, of abetting, if not covertly abetting, crimes committed by its own supporters.

History associates religious persecutions with weak leaders — Mary Tudor in England, Nicholas II in Russia — or with periods of national unease and self-doubt, as with the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain. Asia's economic disasters have made the vulnerable more exposed. But India has been relatively lightly touched by the Asian disease; there, the problem is a governing party that rose to power by cultivating a religious militancy whose destructiveness it is unable or unwilling to control. This is not a resurgence of anti-colonialism, despite the Hindu demands to expel all foreign missionaries: Christians have existed in India since AD52. It has more to do with caste; 60 per cent of Christians are Untouchables, and a further 15 to 20 per cent are Adivasis, remnants of India's down-trodden aboriginal tribes. Most of all, Christians are vulnerable precisely because they are so few; having discovered that attacking Muslims loses the BJP votes, Hindu activists have picked an easier target for their broader message of religious intolerance. The Prime Minister, Ahal Bihari Vajpayee, has told Christians: "I share your agony." The Staines murders will put his Government under pressure to translate his words of pain into effective action.

SAMARANCH MUST GO

His exit is the only way forward for the Olympics

The Olympic Games are facing their most shameful moment in more than a century of idealism and record-breaking achievement. Yet Juan Antonio Samaranch, the President of the International Olympic Committee, refuses to resign. Struggling for responsibility for the latest corruption scandal, he has called instead for a vote of confidence at an extraordinary IOC meeting next month. His move is a cynical attempt to save his career while sacrificing the six members most implicated in the corrupt awarding of the Summer and Winter Games to the winning cities. The affair, however, is far from over, and goes beyond squalid bribery. It has exposed the jealousies, power struggles and abuses of authority that lead directly to Señor Samaranch himself. Until he goes, the Olympic movement will remain blighted.

The former Spanish diplomat has never made a secret of his ambition. As Spanish Ambassador to Brezhnev's Soviet Union, he was accused of cosying up to the Russians as they were desperately trying to stop the post-Afghanistan boycott of the Moscow Olympics. Señor Samaranch spoke out strongly against the boycott; by coincidence, Moscow was one of the strongest proponents of his subsequent nomination as IOC President.

He promised, at the time, to be a clean broom to sweep out the age and dust that had settled in the IOC corridors. There were pointed reminders that Avery Brundage, the venerable former President, had been well over 80 when he retired in 1972, and had blighted his tenure with a reputation for autocratic behaviour. By 2001, when his term ends, Señor Sama-

ranch will be 81; and the stories of his vanity, arrogance and regal lifestyle make Mr Brundage seem a model of saintly humility by comparison.

Of all organisations, the Olympics, founded to promote moral as well as physical excellence, should be sensitive to the ideals of youth, brotherhood and international goodwill. But though these clichés are forever on the lips of Señor Samaranch and his cronies, there is little room for youth and less for goodwill, in their determination to remain in power.

Señor Samaranch has now headed the IOC for 18 years. The committee members are virtually his appointees. With the expansion of his power base into the Third World, he brought in members for whom the culture of mutual favours was both tempting and acceptable. They owed their position to him: he owed his power to their votes. The most notorious of the members now facing expulsion, Jean-Claude Ganga from the Congo, has been accused of making £30,000 from a land deal set up by Salt Lake City. It was he who led the move in the IOC to extend the President's tenure so that Señor Samaranch, hungry for a Nobel Peace Prize, could remain in office beyond the age set for retirement.

Señor Samaranch now claims, with breathtaking disingenuity, that he knew nothing of corruption and is a victim of his underlings. If so, he should be dismissed for incompetence. If he knew but turned a blind eye, he should be sacked for dishonesty. Under his presidency, the movement has lost direction, vitality and now credibility. If the Olympics are to be saved, he should resign forthwith.

YOUNG EINSTEINS

The Times and the Royal Institution put youth on a pedestal

The scientific life presents a paradox. While the greatest discoveries are almost invariably made by the young, the world's academies are occupied by the old. Professors in their sixties preside over departments in which the creative work is done by research students in their twenties, with no tenure and no guarantee of continued employment. When they publish papers, their names often appear below those of their supervisors. Recognition comes creeping slow, too slow for many who leave the profession in despair.

Of course, nobody ever pretended that becoming a scientist was an easy option. It takes years to build a reputation, so that by the time it is achieved the most productive years are past. Scientists win prizes not for work they did last year, but a decade or more ago. The prizes which Alfred Nobel intended to recognise the finest achievements of that year are usually given to old men, and less often women, for discoveries made when they were young. The weight of hierarchy hangs heavy over the whole enterprise.

Tomorrow evening at the Royal Institution in London, the first in a series of lectures by young scientists is to be given by an Oxford chemist, Martin Westwell, on antibiotic resistance. The Times is backing the lecture series, the idea of Professor Susan Greenfield, the new and energetic

director of the Royal Institution. Her intentions are twofold. First, she hopes in a small way to challenge the hierarchy of science by giving an opportunity to young scientists — those under 40 — to lecture in the theatre made famous by Humphry Davy and Michael Faraday. Secondly, she proposes to award the best lecturer at the end of the year with a prize for scientific communication, a skill seldom rewarded in the normal order of things but increasingly recognised as vitally important.

She does not pretend that the lectures are more than a gesture towards redressing the balance in science. More needs to be done to improve the career structure of young scientists, and make them less subject to the weight of authority exerted by those who run departments. If a young patent examiner called Albert Einstein had needed a grant to pursue his researches in relativity, he would never have got one; nor would Charles Darwin have been allowed to set foot on HMS Beagle if he had known, and declared, that his experience there would unsettle the Creator. Great science is subversive, bold, and risky — the very qualities of youth. Too much of today's science, by contrast, is conservative and pedestrian, dominated by committees and rules which inhibit true creativity. And we may never know what we have missed.

Blair must halt Ulster 'mob rule'

From Mr A. D. D. Kent

Sir, You are to be congratulated in drawing attention to the continuing violence in Northern Ireland (reports from Martin Fletcher, January 11, 14, 20, 22 and 25).

If, during the first week of January, five Home Counties men had been shot by hooded thugs and a further dozen attacked since, not to mention the hundreds maimed during the last year, the matter would have had top priority, with calls from the media and MPs for immediate action.

Our Government, comfortably ensconced far away from this sickening daily round of injury and death, must take action and give full support to those within the communities who wish it to stop, but are reluctant to speak out.

For a start, the Prime Minister might go on Ulster TV to explain how others feel: that such barbarous, unjustified behaviour sickens any civilised person; that these are not the actions of strong men but of weak, cowardly, inferior individuals; and, most important, that we expect the senior officials of all groupings to stamp it out now.

This psychopathic criminal behaviour is seriously close to mob rule.

Yours

A. D. KENT,
Long Mynd, Upper Station Road,
Henfield, West Sussex BN5 9PH,
January 25.

From Dr Alan Sked

Sir, The news that Adam Ingram, the Northern Ireland Security Minister, is to meet "relatives of an IRA unit killed by the SAS while attacking a Co Armagh police station" (report, January 22) provides yet more evidence of the nature of the "peace process".

Daily, more and more criminals — murderers, bombers, arsonists, thugs — are released on to the streets; daily more punishment hearings are being reported. Yet the IRA, which has already broken one ceasefire, insists that it will decommission no weapons and warns us that the present ceasefire is also in danger of being broken. The Government's response has been to appease it even further. The Prime Minister's promises, made (cynically? dishonestly?) before the Northern Irish referendum, have been carefully mothballed while Mo Mowlam has recently been reduced to silence.

The reasons are clear. Peace in Northern Ireland was brought about when it suited the IRA to get its most valuable terrorists out of prison. Now that that process is well under way, it can wait for more concessions or return to violence.

The question is whether the Government, having been duped once, will allow itself to be duped again. Or does it really believe that cross-border institutions for fisheries and tourism are what the IRA want to war to achieve?

Yours sincerely,

ALAN SKED,
Flat 3, Aberdeen Court,
68 Aberdeen Park,
Highbury, NS 2BH,
January 22.

Sierra Leone conflict

From Lieutenant-Colonel

Tim Spicer (retd)

Sir, I read with interest Sam Kiley's article today, "Send in the mercenaries, Mr Cook".

Sandline has always maintained its willingness to act in support of President Kabbah and Ecomog. If democracy is to survive in Sierra Leone the time has come to stop pretending that there is any way to negotiate a permanent peaceful settlement with the RUF (Revolutionary United Front). We must take the gloves off, defeat them in the field and shut off their external support.

This is the third time that the RUF has virtually taken over Sierra Leone. The international community must wake up to the threat: surely it is now time for First World governments to engage private military companies which, in the absence of military support from the West, are prepared to demonstrate the pragmatic application of an ethical foreign policy?

A vicious organisation like the RUF, which arrogantly commits unspeakable atrocities against its fellow countrymen and treats the international community with contempt, deserves to be destroyed, not given the benefit of a negotiated settlement.

Yours etc,

TIM SPICER,
Sandline International,
535 Kings Road, SW10 0SZ,
January 22.

The wrong signal

From Mr Brian Walker

Sir, Sign seen recently in a Leeds mobile phone shop: "100 minutes free calls — only £5".

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN WALKER,
23 Station Road,
Tadcaster, North Yorkshire LS24 9QE.
brian.walker@kpmg.co.uk,
January 19.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Corruption on an Olympian scale

From Mr George Moody-Stuart

Sir, The Olympic scandal (reports, January 23 and 25) may cause many people to question at what point a gift becomes a bribe.

For many years the standard definition of corruption has been one coined by J. J. Senaria for the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, published in 1931: "The misuse of public power for private profit." This, however, is relevant to the receiver rather than to the payer.

In the latter case, Professor Wesley Cragg, writing in a recent issue of the *International Journal* (Canadian Institute of Public Affairs), has offered: "Any attempt to persuade someone in a position of responsibility to make a decision or recommendation on any grounds other than the intrinsic merits of the case."

In the United States it is a crime under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (1977) to bribe a public official from another country; and presumably the Justice Department will now be looking closely at Salt Lake City's bid for the 2002 Winter Olympics and perhaps Atlanta's earlier success also.

The OECD's Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials, which will have a similar effect in participant countries including the UK, does not come into force until February 15, 1999.

Meanwhile the President of the Australian Olympic Association is quoted (*The Sunday Times*, January 24) as saying, in relation to large cash payments made to the Kenyan and Ugandan Olympic Committees: "My view was that it might encourage them to consider their votes for

Sydney." If that is not corruption, what is?

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE MOODY-STUART
(Chairman),
Transparency International (UK),
St Nicholas House, St Nicholas Road,
Sutton, Surrey SM1 1EL,
January 25.

From the Chairman of
The Olympians

Sir, Mr Juan Antonio Samaranch may plead ignorance of the corruption within his International Olympic Committee, but he cannot walk away from the fact that he personally set the parameters for Olympic profligacy.

We are told that he expects a stretch limousine for even the shortest of journeys, that he will seldom use public transport but expects private helicopters, aircraft and even trains to be available for him to reach the best suite in the finest hotel in any city that is hosting his visit.

This grandiose lifestyle has inevitably sent strong messages to his colleagues and minions within the IOC, many of whom have come to regard the Olympic Movement as a gravy-train and act accordingly.

What we need now is an IOC President who exhibits a more humble and restrained approach to the development of the Olympic ethos.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN DISLEY,
Chairman, The Olympians,
Hampton House,
Upper Sunbury Road,
Hampton, Middlesex TW12 2DW,
January 25.

Airport at Aldeburgh

From Mr Yann Borgstedt

Sir, The letter from the chief executive of Aldeburgh Productions and others about an airport three miles from Snape Maltings at Benwaters (January 21) was long on emotion but short on information.

The US military airfield at Benwaters coexisted happily with the Maltings for many years. There is no reason why that cannot happen again. We have told the new chief executive we would very much like to work with him to achieve that.

We are, after all, talking about a local airport with projections of ten commercial flights a day in ten years' time, using quiet, modern aircraft which will hardly be heard at The Maltings above the background noise of daily life.

Aldeburgh Town Council, which is equally concerned about the success of the festival, has no reservations about our plan to regenerate a derelict eyecore, creating 2,000 jobs with homes on the doorstep, while restoring local health and woodland. They have voted 11-2 in favour of our proposal.

After all we are not proposing

something new. The principle of continuing aviation at Benwaters has been well established since 1993 by government-appointed inspectors, the county council and the district council, partly in recognition of the fact that Suffolk is now the only English county without a commercial airport.

Yours faithfully,
YANN BORGSTEDT
(Project Manager),
Anglia International Airport,
Rendlesham, Suffolk IP12 2RJ,
January 21.

From Mr Lewis Benjamin

Sir, It's been a long while since I have read such an OTT and self-important squawk of pointless panic as from the "names" at Aldeburgh. They should be ashamed of themselves for associating with such nimbyism.

All that is required is for what little traffic there's ever likely to be from Benwaters to avoid Snape. Even Joan Sutherland at full throttle couldn't be heard from three miles away.

Yours in disbelief,
LEWIS BENJAMIN,
17 Brown Court, Westfields,
Ashby de la Zouch LE65 2LZ,
January 21.

Thatcher on leadership

From Mr Kenneth Harris

Sir, Magnus Linklater, in his most stimulating column, "A hole at the heart of this parliament" (January 21), recalls, with approval, the now famous words of Margaret Thatcher, "...you've got to have a togetherness, a unity in your Cabinet", and her belief in a Cabinet composed only of "the people who want to go in the direction which every instinct tells me we have to go. Clearly, steadily, firmly, with resolution".

Mr Linklater states that this courageous utterance was made "early in Thatcher's first administration". In fact, she made it to me, in an interview for *The Observer* several weeks before the 1979 election, which many thought she would lose, at the head of a much divided party, most of whose leaders strongly disapproved of her view on how to run governments, some fearing her airing of their might cost them the election.

Yours etc,
KENNETH HARRIS,
45 Molyneux Street,
London W1H 5HW,
January 21.

Problem shelved

From Mrs Imogen Mottram

Sir, Unable to find any tins of tomatoes in the canned vegetables section of a supermarket in Aberdeen (letters, January 18 and 20) I was directed to the Italian section, marked "Foreign Foods".

Yours sincerely,
IMOGEN MOTTRAM,
15 Freewaters Close, Ickleford,
Nr Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 3TQ,
January 21.

From Mr M. J. J. Tanner

Sir, Whilst in Normandy last summer, I found Bisto gravy powder in a hardware shop on the same shelf as colouring for the gown.

And in a small town near Oslo, a number of years ago, I saw Finndus fish fingers in a freezer selling frozen cat food.

Yours sincerely,
M. J. J. TANNER,
2 Highfield Road,
Worthing, West Sussex BN13 1PX,
January 20.

Tone of Sir Paul's call to parents

From Mrs Jenny Anderson

Sir, I am more offended by Sir Paul McCartney's message to parents (report and advertisement, January 25) than by his late wife's use of the F-word in her new single.

His sarcastic and mocking tone would more become a cocky, teenage pop star who is in the throes of youthful rebellion than an ageing one whose remarks should be tempered by his years and the responsibilities of parenthood. For shame, Sir Paul.

Yours,

JENNIFER ANDERSON,
6 Halsey Lane, Herford SG13 7NX,
jackson@globalnet.co.uk,
January 25.

From Mr Rodney Gray

Sir, Your newspaper today contains a half-page advertisement by Sir Paul McCartney, but no address to which one may reply.

I hold Sir Paul in the highest regard. I am a great admirer of his work and that of his late wife, and I felt enormous sympathy with him when she died. I can accept, too, his views about the words to which he refers and that in many areas today they are in common use. I wonder if he can accept, however, that there are those to whom they give great offence.

I for one have no wish to hear them on my radio or television, even though I am about the same age as Sir Paul. While I fully support the rights of those who wish to buy the record and hear the lyrics, I also fully support those who seek to avoid giving offence to me and countless others by not bringing the words into my home.

Yours sincerely,
RODNEY GRAY,
Homefield, Hordean,
Berwick upon Tweed TD15 1XJ,
January 25.

Baths at Qumran

From Mr Robert Feather

Sir, Ms Gloria Moss, in her article in *Faith and Freedom* on the so-called "1st-century health spa" at Qumran (report, January 18), appears to ignore the evidence that the main activity of the community of Essenes at Qumran was prayer and devotion to holy texts.

Similar immersion baths to those at Qumran (which is not in Jordan, as you report, but in Israel) have been found elsewhere in Israel, and the community's writings make it clear that extreme cleanliness and ritual washing was essential to their way of life — hence the large number of baths. The community did have secrets. It is true, but these related to things other than medicines.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT FEATHER,
35 Baxendale, Whetstone, N20 0EG.

Golden years

From Dr Julia Leach

Sir, I have long believed that middle age (letters, January 5, 12 and 19) is ten years older than me, and old age is ten years older than my parents.

Yours faithfully,
JULIA LEACH,
The Lodge, Sandy Lane,
Old Lakenham, Norwich NR1 2NR.

From Mr Bob Capon

Sir, I always understood that 40 is the old age of youth and 50 the youth of old age.

Yours faithfully,
R. W. CAPON,
54 Ridgeway Crescent,
Orpington, Kent BR6 9QP,
January 22.

From Mr Henry R. Magrill

Sir, Perhaps the best late 20th-century definition of middle age is: "Too old to be a toy boy and too young to be a sugar daddy".

Yours faithfully,
HENRY R. MAGRILL,
Flat 6, 7 Cleveland Gardens, W2 6HA,
magrill@card.net,
January 19.

Time warp

From Mr Ivan K. Rowland

Sir, I seem to recall that the esteemed film critic Mr Barry Norman referred to the film *2010* as "ten past eight" (letter, January 19).

Yours faithfully,
IVAN K. ROWLAND,
59 Coddington Hill, SE23 1LR,
January 19.

Heavenly bliss

From Mrs Janet Kingston

Sir, Dr Stuttaford states in his article on Viagra (Medical briefing, January 22), "there is no sex in the graveyard".

Any vicar, vicar's wife, vergar, sexton, etc. would tell him that there is usually evidence to the contrary in most graveyards. I suspect my husband has often baptised a baby conceived within a few yards of the font.

Yours faithfully,
JANET KINGSTON,
8 Pengilly Road, Farnham GU9 7XQ,
roykingston@lineone.net,
January 22.

COURT CIRCULAR

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PRIVATE: 0171 4

LEADER FINANCIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, NEWS

CHRISTIAN FORWARDS, FOR WATER RIVERS, FOR A

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PERSONAL COLUMN

ENDLE/DOWIS - On January 16th 1999 in Bristol to Andrew and Anna, a beautiful daughter, Olivia Jane.

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ford Cathedral.

Undertaker, 01497 8
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Bronllys Hospital, P
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to John Rowland Hughes
wys. FRCS, beloved mother of
Judy and grandmother of
Chloe and Nicnie.

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Summer House. No flowers
but donations may be sent
to the Alzheimers Disease
Society, Greencoat Place,
London SW1P 1PH.

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181 777 4302.
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NatWest appoints 93 area franchise managers



Stern: growth in Europe

By Rodney Hobson

NATWEST BANK has consolidated its position as the leading bank providing services to franchising by appointing a network of franchise managers located around the country.

Some of the 93 new area franchise managers will be at the National Franchise Exhibition at the G-Mex Centre, Manchester, next week. NatWest will retain its head office staff of eight under Peter Stern, who has been head of franchising for 16 years. He said the network, intended to

cover the whole of England, Scotland and Wales, had been developed in response to the continued growth of franchising in the UK. Recruiting has taken place over the past nine months.

Mr Stern said: "The introduction of our new franchise managers is another positive step in helping new and existing customers to succeed in this growth area. Franchising is big business, accounting for a fifth of all UK retail sales. Not only is franchising taking off in the UK — in Europe we are seeing rapid growth. That is why last year we went into partner-

ship with four leading European banks."

NatWest is currently completing its annual survey in conjunction with the British Franchise Association. Results will be published in March. Last year franchising turnover was reported at £7 billion, with 568 franchise systems operating 29,100 outlets and employing 273,800 people.

Total franchise turnover in Europe is estimated at more than £60 billion, with more than 3,800 franchises operating 167,000 franchised outlets and employing 1.5 million people.

CFI, the organiser of the G-Mex exhibition on February 5 and 6, reports that 75 stands have been booked. They include Signs Express, which will begin its 1999 recruitment campaign at the event.

David Corbett, managing director of Signs Express, said: "We believe there are significant opportunities for signage business, especially in the North of England, where we would like to open more outlets."

Also taking part will be Kall Kwik, the print and design franchise, which achieved total turnover of

more than £70 million last year. CFI also organises annual franchise exhibitions at Wembley and in Glasgow.

Miller Freeman, organiser of the franchise exhibition at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, said that 11,224 visitors attended the event last October.

It is the first time that the attendance has been audited independently by ABC. The figure excludes organisers, NEC personnel and re-entries.

Futurekids, one of the fastest-growing franchises in the country, will be taking a stand at Manches-

ter. It provides computer literacy training for children, adults and teachers and already operates in 75 countries, training 100,000 children a year.

It was founded in Los Angeles in 1983 on the premise that learning computer skills would be as important as learning to read and write. In Britain, it works in partnership with the Institute of Education, the University of London, the Joint Examining Board and, in hospital schools, the National Association for the Education of Sick Children.

Signs point to prospect of growth

By Rodney Hobson

AN EVER-GROWING list of franchises, many in areas not previously covered by franchise systems, is on offer to would-be entrepreneurs.

A new franchise has been set up to service and manage estate agency "For Sale" signs. Called Agency Express, it offers estate agency chains and independent operators a cost-effective method for erecting, servicing and removing property signs.

There are about 14 million "For Sale" boards outside properties in Britain at any one time. Fewer than half of all properties on the market had boards outside ten years ago. Now the figure is almost 80 per cent.

Despite indications that the housing market could slow down along with the rest of the economy, Agency Express is stepping up its search for franchisees across the country. It claims that when the market is depressed and it is difficult to sell houses, a greater percentage of properties on the market have sale signs outside.

In addition, Agency Express said it has spotted lucrative new opportunities for shorter-term signs including homes for rent and commercial properties for leasing. The franchise system is an offshoot of Signs Express, which is based in Nor-

wich and now has 65 outlets. The initial cost of an Agency Express franchise is £9,950, which includes a ten-year agreement, the deposit on a van and specialist equipment.

After the success of pilot operations last year, Wicked Wheels is ready to recruit two franchisees a month. An investment costs £25,000. Wicked Wheels is a mobile alloy wheels refurbishment service designed to make corroded and damaged wheels look like new.

Stephen Wood, of Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, spent £300,000 and two years developing mobile equipment that can shootblast, repair, repaint and relacquar alloy wheels from cars, vans and motorcycles.

Mr Wood said: "Car dealers and fleet managers can add hundreds of pounds to the value of their used vehicles by bringing them back to 'as new'. It is an easy message to sell in a market that we have already proven with our sister franchise business Paint Technik." The service is also aimed at classic car specialists. The cost is about £30 a wheel.

Prospective franchisees ought to check out any franchise system and if possible talk to existing franchisees before signing up. New franchise systems should have run a pilot project.



Class of their own: ex-teachers David and Julie Mitchell prefer handbells to school bells

Husband and wife are crying good team

Bernard Silk
meets a couple
who rang the
changes to be
town criers

DAVID and Julie Mitchell claim to be the world's first husband-and-wife team of town criers.

Both former teachers, they find running their own business more congenial than the classroom these days.

Mr Mitchell had arranged for a town crier to waken his wife-to-be with a bellowed proclamation outside her window on their wedding day in 1989.

The crier cried off — he was double-booked — so Mr Mitchell borrowed his spare bell and robes and did the job himself.

"I thought it was fun," he says. "I began to deputise as a town crier on a part-time basis in Chester and soon became a town crier in my own right in some surrounding towns."

He left teaching in 1992 and combined a new career in calligraphy — in which he produces bespoke wedding invitations, town-twining charters, official documents, poems and certificates — with being a town crier.

Now he and Mrs Mitchell are the official town criers in Chester. From May to August, they declaim in the town five days a week. They welcome tourists in up to eight languages and boom forth local histories and announcements, and they have been hired to do six public proposals of marriage, all of which were accepted.

The couple have taken part in town crier competitions, winning trophies all over Brit-

ain, and in Australia and Canada. So, what does the aspiring town crier need?

"You must have confidence and a loud voice — but not simply to shout like a sergeant-major," says Mr Mitchell. "You have to modulate your delivery and be prepared to be spontaneous. And you must have great legs to wear the tights."

The outfit does not come cheap. It costs from about £1,500 and it is a false economy to skimp, the couple say. Fortunately, Mrs Mitchell has another skill. She makes liveries for town criers and recently received an order from a town in Victoria, Australia.

The coat, which is made of pure wool and trimmed with gold lace, may take 100 hours to complete and costs £750. A hat and bell might cost £50 apiece.

Even with all their sidelines, Mr Mitchell finds time to give an after-dinner presentation, entitled "For crying out loud", at £120 a time. The couple's annual turnover is a comparatively

modest £22,500 because the employment is mainly seasonal.

They charge a minimum of £40 for a turnout in the Chester area. Long-distance jobs may cost several hundred pounds, subject to negotiation, with the client paying travel costs. The couple work together and solo.

Mrs Mitchell says that you need to be a combination of an entertainer and a civic official, adding: "You can't be a wimp because you have to deal with comments and quips from the crowd, sometimes taking the mickey, in an interesting and amusing way. In the business, it's called conviviality and public friendliness. You have to take to people because they constantly approach you."

Town criers go back into the mists of time. They told the populace about news, impending visits of royalty, and deaths of local people and gave warning of floods and epidemics. Nowadays there are about 150 town criers in the UK, most employed on an occasional basis. About 10 per cent of town criers are women, and they take part on an equal basis in competitions against their male counterparts.

"Last year's runner-up world champion was a woman," said Mrs Mitchell, "and in 1997 the loudest declaim in a competition came from a woman crier."

David and Julie Mitchell are on 01244 311736.

Town centres get smart to win back shoppers

A SMARTCARD has been introduced to win shoppers back to town centres, where independent businesses have complained for years about unfair competition from supermarkets (Rodney Hobson writes).

The card is already in use to more than 150 shops in Nottingham.

Paul Ashley, managing director of Touch, a London company that has developed the card first in Nottingham at the city council's invitation, said: "Our aim is to bring customers back into high streets and fight out-of-town hypermarkets."

Although the Nottingham signatories include big businesses such as Ravel and Knickerbox, most are small independent companies. These have been more prompt in their dealings with the card issuer.

"It is easier to get a decision from the small company," said Mr Ashley. "The matter does



Knickerbox has already signed up for smartcards

not have to be referred to anybody else."

Card users in Nottingham receive a 2 per cent discount on purchases and savings of up to 10 per cent at the city council's indoor leisure centres.

A participating business receives a free list of all cardhold-

ers from Touch but pays for research data, such as the age bracket of its customers, so that it can tailor similar shoppers. Touch is about to issue the card in Maidstone, Kent, and is in discussions to start a scheme in Bristol. Studies of the possibility of a card are to be carried out in Manchester and Cambridge, and sights have been set on Southampton, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Oxford, Norwich, Coventry, Wolverhampton, and Tamworth, Staffordshire, and Southend, Essex.

John McSherry, a partner in the firm's shopping centre management team, said: "We try to bring together the local authority, the landowners and all interested parties to improve town centres."

So many small companies complain that recruiting is time-consuming and expensive that a free service, in which applicants take a job on a three-week trial, has been started in South London.

The service, Working Advantage, set up by the Employment Service and Solotec, the area's training and enterprise council, brings employer and applicant together without charge.

However, the jobseeker works unpaid for the three-week trial and retains all social security payments under an agreement with the Benefits Agency. If the applicant is taken on permanently, Working Advantage pays the employer £300 to cover expenses. Working Advantage may also make a contribution to the cost of any training scheme undertaken by the new employee. Inquiries: 0800 800222.

Small businesses and small customers are among the slowest payers of invoices, according to the latest quarterly survey by the Institute of Credit Management. Very large businesses and central government are also culprits, the institute says. Firms in a long-term relationship tend to pay quickly. The survey found that cash-flow was the main reason for late payment, followed by intentional late payment.

A trade mission to the Philippines has been organised for May 3 to 7 by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Cost of the package is £1,070. Inquiries: 0121-450 4215.

The Federation of Small Businesses marks its 25th anniversary with its annual conference at Blackpool, near to Lytham St Anne's, where the organisation was formed. Michael Wills, the new Small Firms Minister, will put in an appearance and the main business speaker is Sir Christopher Harding, president of the Prince's Youth Business Trust. The conference, on March 19 to 21, will be attended by more than 500 delegates.

Radar homes in on smallest employers

By Brian Collett

A CONFERENCE has been called by the charity Radar to encourage small businesses to employ disabled people.

Many of the businesses targeted by Radar — the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation — have fewer than 15 staff and are not covered by the legislation on employing disabled people.

Radar will offer specific advice for businesses and will detail the kind of "reasonable adjustments" that the legislation stipulates should be made to accommodate disabled employees. "This may

be as simple as giving somebody time off for physiotherapy," said Nick Goss, Radar's education, training and employment officer.

He believes that operating and monitoring a policy on disabled employees is easier in a business with a small staff. Allowing staff to work from home could also be easier to monitor.

The conference is at the Royal College of Physicians on April 19. Small business organisations as well as employers have been invited. Inquiries: 0171-250 3222.

Hospitality jobs to soar

EMPLOYMENT in London's hotel and catering business will rise at four times the capital's average employment growth rate over the next two years, a report issued today says (Brian Collett writes).

Yet this sector has the highest number of employers reporting shortages of skilled staff. The report, drawn up by the London Skills Forecasting

Unit, highlights the difficulties that small firms have in recruiting and training staff. The unit was formed by the London Text Council, the umbrella body for the capital's seven training and enterprise councils.

The researchers say that manufacturing has the worst training record in London. Only 31 per cent of employers gave their workforce training

last year. The best record was in financial services, with 79 per cent giving training.

The aim of the report, the first produced by the unit, is to show further and higher education establishments, Tecs and employers the training needed to staff London businesses and to enable people to find work. It is funded by the Tecs and the European Commission.

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Those whose interest in railways encompasses the historical rather than the day-to-day practicalities of getting around are likely to be familiar with the National Railway Museum in York.

The largest of its kind in the world, the collection includes 105 engines and 280 items of rolling stock, while the archives contain 1.4 million photographs, 230,000 engineering drawings, 15,000 books and 7,000 posters.

Graham Stratford, the museum's head of public affairs, says that applying for the Charter Mark helped to unite and focus staff. "We know we exist in a competitive environment, and to keep our slot as one of the most visited attractions outside London — 430,000 last year — we have to go on meeting and exceeding our visitors' expectations."

What York is to trains, Portsmouth is to ships — and to the Royal Navy in particular. Reductions in the size of the dockyard and falling employment in ancillary industries have forced the city fathers to look to tourism as an alternative source of revenue.

The council has set up three tourist information centres — overseen by the English and Southern Tourist Boards — which handled 370,000 inquiries last year, 15 per cent of them from abroad. All the permanent and most of the temporary staff speak at least one foreign language.

Birmingham's transformation from the grimy "work-

The glory days of engineering and shipping inspire quality tourism, says John Young

shop of the world" into a city with serious cultural ambitions is reflected in the fact that it has the largest local authority museums service in Britain.

At its heart is the Museum and Art Gallery, which houses the world's leading collection of Pre-Raphaelite art. It recently presented a successful Burke-Jones exhibition. The Birmingham City Authority also runs the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, which reflects the early years of the century, and Aston Hall, one of the finest Jacobean houses in the country. The Charter Mark assessors were impressed by visitors' positive comments.

Belfast Zoological Gardens, established in 1934, have in recent years provided a haven for recreation and education in a city plagued for so long by violence and destruction. The zoo has won several prizes for animal husbandry and the design of its enclosure. Now it has added a Charter Mark award for its facilities, service and value for money.

In Torquay, the Riviera Centre has won two Charter Mark awards for its conference bureau and its sports and leisure department. Sarah James, of the conference bureau, says that bookings extend well into the next millennium with more

and more national organisations and companies being sold on the delights of Torbay.

"We attach tremendous importance to detail to ensure we cover the simplest to the most difficult tasks," she says. "We offer not only a free venue-finding service, but also complete conference packaging."

Sports and leisure facilities include a swimming pool, Jacuzzi, steam room and sauna, as well as a gym which is used by Torquay United Football Club members, and athletes who hope to qualify for the British skiing team for the next Winter Olympics.

While visits to museums or swimming pools are generally agreeable experiences, encounters with police or tax inspectors are something that most people prefer to avoid. But Inspector Reg Haslam, of Merseyside Police's traffic department, insists that the work of his team goes well beyond "nicking" the errant driver who is caught speeding.

He points to the department's goal of reducing the number of traffic accidents which cost so much in public money and human suffering. Every accident is recorded on a computerised Ordnance Survey map along with details of what caused it. This enables the authorities to determine if and where further traffic re-

strictions are needed, in some cases this cuts casualties by half.

"Our investigations are carried out to the highest standards, comparable to those methods employed by the CID," Inspector Haslam says. "We have officers trained to provide care and support for bereaved relatives, and the letters of appreciation we get far outnumber the complaints."

The Inland Revenue's much publicised attempts to present a more humane face to the public have been rewarded by the granting of 11 new Charter Marks, bringing its total to 19.

The winning offices, mostly in the North of England and in Scotland, include Shipley in West Yorkshire, where more than 1,000 staff have been trained to use "plain English" and to provide a streamlined telephone answering service for customers, most of whom live more than 200 miles away. In Bootle, on Merseyside, tax workshops have been organised and customers are invited to visit the office.

The Inland Revenue's South Yorkshire region, with its headquarters in Sheffield, employs some 4,200 staff in 33 offices and carries out regular complaints surveys to determine the levels of customer satisfaction.

The Buckle tax office, on the remote Moray coast of north-east Scotland, which employs just 16 people, has organised an appointments system for its 6,400 customers. This helped it to earn its second Charter Mark award.



Living history: Platform 4 resident theatre group as Brunel and Stephenson at the National Railway Museum

Scheme wins Labour's approval

Edward Fennell on how Charter Mark's ethos of putting customers first fits the Government's strategy

ONE of the biggest practical challenges facing this administration is how to deliver on its commitment to "joined-up Government". Behind the neat catchphrase is a complex exercise in re-engineering the way public services are planned and delivered by emphasising co-operation between departments — whether in Whitehall or the town hall.

But for bureaucrats to co-operate often goes against the grain of territorial protectiveness. So a set of tools is now being used to weld services together. Among them, Charter Mark has an important role to play.

Admittedly when Labour arrived in power it needed to be convinced that Charter Mark was a worthwhile undertaking. But an evaluation of the scheme produced some impressive results. Charter Mark organisations were shown to perform considerably better than the norm. Staff morale was higher. And feedback from the public showed

that they were better consulted by Charter Mark organisations. As a result the Government decided not to scrap the award — but to expand it.

Yet if Charter Mark was to gain a new Labour character it had to support the "joined up" approach. Fortunately that is not difficult. Charter Mark is about putting the public, not the providers, at the centre of the service.

Getting rid of rivalries and abandoning turf wars between public servants is part of this process. As Peter Kilfoyle, Parliamentary Secretary in the Office of Public Service, puts it: "There have been substantial improvements in public service delivery by a number of government bodies — especially in the agencies. But these improvements are not always coherently connected. I want us to do much more to see the customer's point of

view. Citizens dealing with life's events — marriage, retirement, long-term care, whatever — want a package of services tailored to their needs. They do not want to trudge round public sector agencies. We must make things easier for them through one-stop shops, tighter co-operation, collaborative electronic service provision, better signposting, between services, or whatever suits best."

Reflecting this approach the new Charter Mark criteria for this year include the need to work with other providers. Charter Mark also complements naturally the new Best Value programme through its emphasis on consulting users and reviewing standards of performance. The forthcoming White Paper on modernising Government will emphasise Charter Mark's role in promoting this customer-focused

approach. Mr Kilfoyle quotes, for example, the work of Hackney council, under the Better Government for Older People programme, in running a project for integrated services, and the Lewisham Benefits Agency prototype which provides central and local government benefits.

The emphasis within Charter Mark on partnership extends to the relationship with the public. Under the Conservatives the public were described as customers. Under Labour they have become users, with the implication that providers and users should collaborate closely to get the most out of the system. As Mr Kilfoyle points out: "Charter Mark emphasises co-operation between service providers and users. This can be deepened in many ways. For example, Chervell District Council Environmental

Health Department's bus takes services to the people. Birmingham council now operates 43 one-stop shops. And the National Museums of Scotland has a junior board of 12 schoolchildren." All three organisations are 1998 Charter Mark winners.

But co-operation does not disguise the fact that Charter Mark does have a hard edge. Mr Kilfoyle says there must be greater exposure to the public. "Charter Mark winners must have customer service standards which are transparent and open. Performance

against them must be assessed and subject to public scrutiny."

Perhaps the final link in the new framework of co-operation is between Charter Mark itself and the other quality awards. Mr Kilfoyle says: "Charter Mark is a tried and tested scheme. There is no doubt that it enhances public service delivery. Finally, let's not forget the workers. What is good for the users of services must also be good ultimately for those who deliver them. Charter Mark winners have high self-esteem."



Peter Kilfoyle: ending turf wars between public servants

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INSIDE
SECTION

2

TODAY

ECONOMICS

Anatole Kaletsky
on Brazil and the
wrong medicine

PAGE 29

ARTS

See him here, see
him there: actor
Jeremy Northam

PAGES 34-36

LAW

Why is the OFT
tackling football's
Premier League?

PAGES 39-43

TELEVISION
AND
RADIO

Pages
50, 51

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

TUESDAY JANUARY 26 1999

Mirror directors face showdown today



Montgomery determined not to resign

BY RAYMOND SLOAN
MEDIA EDITOR

LAST-MINUTE efforts were being made last night to avoid a damaging confrontation at today's board meeting of Mirror Group between Sir Victor Blank, its chairman, and David Montgomery, the chief executive.

Sir Victor had been expected to put a motion before the board seeking the removal of Mr Montgomery, who has run the newspaper group since the death of Robert Maxwell. Mr Montgomery is determined not to resign and will oppose any attempt to unseat him. Sir Victor believes that he has the

support of most, if not all, of the company's non-executive directors, while Mr Montgomery believes that he can rely on the votes of the executive directors.

The dispute comes in the midst of potential takeover bids for the group, which publishes *The Mirror*, the *Sunday Mirror* and *The People*. It also owns Midland Independent Newspapers, the regional publisher.

Regional Independent Media, publisher of the *Yorkshire Post*, is awaiting more information in the hope of making a formal bid, possibly in excess of its offer of £913 million, or 200p a share, already on the table.

The situation is being closely watched by

Trinity, the largest UK regional newspaper group, which withdrew from talks on an all-share deal at about 100p.

The move against Mr Montgomery is being fuelled by the fact that he is seen as a barrier to a deal with Trinity, something that appeals to Phillips & Drew, the largest Mirror shareholder, with a 22 per cent stake.

It is believed that Sir Victor and other Mirror directors were being advised last night that a formal vote that would split the board would not be in the interests of the company or its shareholders.

A Mirror takeover by RIM or Trinity would lead to an automatic reference to the

Monopolies and Mergers Commission. A full inquiry could take up to the six months.

It was unclear last night whether Sir Victor, who became chairman of Mirror Group six months ago, will seek a confrontation at today's meeting. If he does, one tactic for Mr Montgomery would be to seek a postponement with the backing of executive directors.

Legal and General, a 4.4 per cent Mirror shareholder, yesterday asked to meet Sir Victor. The insurance company feels that Phillips & Drew seems to be driving the agenda.

Mirror shares rose 9p to 207p yesterday.

Commentary, page 29

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	5890.9	(+19.7)
FTSE All Share	2672.59	(+7.63)
Nikkei	14208.51	(+54.41)
Dow Jones	9867.20	(-33.47)
S&P Composite	1222.78	(-2.41)

US RATE

Federal Funds	4.75%	(+1%)
Long bond	102.15	(+0.25)
Yield	5.11%	(+0.09%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month interbank	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Libor long gile	102.04	(120.58)
Future (Mar)	120.04	(120.58)

STERLING

New York	1.8563*	(1.8563)
London	1.8574	(1.8542)
Frankfurt	1.4334	(1.4282)
Paris	1.2215	(1.2258)
Yen	168.83	(168.73)
£ Index	100.2	(99.8)

US \$: £ DOLLAR

London	1.1568*	(1.1560)
Frankfurt	1.3824*	(1.3813)
Paris	1.1311*	(1.1445)
Yen	104.3	(104.4)

Tokyo close Yen 114.30

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Apr)	\$10.95	(\$11.20)
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COMMODITIES

London close	\$288.15	(\$287.45)
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Exchange rates — Page 28
* denotes midday trading prices

Banks express surprise at terms of review

BY RICHARD MILES
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

BANKS gave a cautious welcome yesterday to the terms of the Government's review of banking services, but expressed surprise that Donald Cruickshank, the review's head, had sought to include cross-selling in his investigation.

Mr Cruickshank, a former telecommunications regulator and chairman of the Action 2000 millennium bug campaign, also questioned rumours that the Treasury was considering the imposition of a windfall tax on bank profits.

While Mr Cruickshank emphasised that his inquiry would focus on competition issues, he said there were already grounds for investigating four distinct areas: lending to small businesses, money transmission, credit cards and joint supply, which includes cross-selling.

"It may not appear as a rallying cry to address the things consumers have said they are concerned about, but it is a good start," he said.

Mr Cruickshank will make international comparisons on innovation, competition and efficiency in the UK banking sector. He will also look at whether the Government should consider intervening in the industry.

Bankers said they were surprised at the inclusion within the review of joint supply — the common practice of bundling different products together such as buildings insurance with a mortgage, or a personal loan with a current account.

Control of the credit card network among merchants will also come under Mr Cruickshank's scrutiny. In the US, the Department of Justice has argued that Visa and MasterCard's domination of the credit card network has been anti-competitive.

Social exclusion and consumer redress, however, fall outside the scope of his remit. The deadline for submissions to the review is February 26. He expects to make his final report by the end of the year.

Commentary, page 29

Pressure put on Lucas to discuss £4bn bid

BY PAUL DURMAN

FEDERAL-MOGUL, the fast-growing American car parts group, is trying to force LucasVarity into takeover talks by setting out terms of a conditional offer worth £3.9 billion.

LucasVarity, which makes braking and electronic systems, has rejected an offer of cash and Federal-Mogul stock worth 280p a share. This is 36p more than LucasVarity's closing price yesterday of 244p — up 29p.

Federal-Mogul said it was told in writing yesterday that LucasVarity was "not willing to enter into discussions". The US group hopes that Schroders and other leading UK investors will put pressure on Victor Rice, LucasVarity's chief executive, to hold talks.

Dick Snell, chairman and chief executive of Federal-Mogul, said: "Having been rebuffed, we are making this announcement to allow shareholders to know about it and to do what they think best." Federal-Mogul's offer is conditional on it being given an opportunity to conduct due diligence checks and the recommendation of the LucasVarity board.

In a letter to Mr Rice and Ed Wallis, LucasVarity's chairman, Mr Snell said the 280p a share offer was a 40 per cent premium to the market price before recent takeover speculation. "This is a full price which would offer compelling value to your shareholders and in our judgment is worthy of their consideration," he wrote.

"We are dismayed at your refusal to grant us confirmatory due diligence, particularly since... our principal concern is any such investigation would be to test the reasonableness of the assumptions underlying items such as the pension fund surplus, rather than any detailed assessment of commercially sensitive areas within your company."

LucasVarity's treatment of its pension fund has often

been of concern to its pensioners and employees.

Taking over the larger LucasVarity would enable Mr Snell to achieve the "big hairy audacious goal" he has set for Federal-Mogul of becoming a \$10 billion company by 2002. He said a deal would create a £13 billion industry leader.

Federal-Mogul, with interests that embrace connecting rods, engine bearings, pistons, camshafts and chassis components, has grown rapidly through a series of acquisitions, including the £1.5 billion takeover of T&N two years ago.

LucasVarity's formal response was limited to a reiteration of its statement earlier this month that it was in "preliminary discussions... with a number of companies in connection with a wide range of strategic alternatives, including joint ventures, acquisitions, dispositions, alliances and mergers or other combinations".

The company and its financial advisers, Lazard Brothers and Morgan Stanley, did not respond to calls for comment. Federal-Mogul is being advised by Merrill Lynch, the investment bank that gave LucasVarity a third opinion when it sought to convert itself into a US company last autumn.

Tempus, page 30



Brian Larcombe, chief executive of 3i, wants to obtain Electra at a significant discount

3i overtures lift Electra

BY RICHARD MILES

SHARES in Electra Investment Trust yesterday soared 119p to 682p on confirmation that it has had "an unsolicited approach" from 3i, its main rival in the venture capital field.

3i opened talks with Electra on a possible £1 billion-plus takeover a fortnight ago, but the two have reached deadlock on price and the value of unquoted investments in Electra's portfolio.

Brian Larcombe, 3i's chief executive, is seeking to buy El-

ectra at a significant discount to its net asset value (NAV). Before yesterday's gains, Electra was trading at a wide discount, estimated at 17 per cent.

Michael Stoddart, Electra's chairman, who earned more than £1 million last year including performance bonus, is arguing for a premium to NAV. The trust's manager, Electra Fleming — a 50/50 joint venture with Robert Fleming, the investment bank — could also be an obstacle.

Investment analysts said a merger to form a venture capitalist with assets of nearly £5 billion would enhance value for both sets of shareholders. On one estimate, 3i investors would gain about 50p a share.

Rolly Crawford, of ABN Amro, said the extra £1 billion of assets would also secure 3i's place in the FTSE 100 index.

Feeling the pinch, page 28
Commentary, page 29
Tempus, page 30

Microsoft acquires stake in NTL for £300m

BY CHRIS AYRES

THE UK cable industry was given a significant boost yesterday when Microsoft, the US software giant, acquired a 5 per cent stake in NTL for \$300 million (£300 million).

The deal will help to improve the image of the UK cable industry, which is finally beginning to show signs of life after years of turmoil and slow growth. As part of the deal, Microsoft and NTL will form a "technology group" that will look at ways of developing ultrafast internet services and interactive television.

Shares in NTL, which is quoted on the Nasdaq stock market despite operating almost exclusively in the UK, rose nearly 25 per cent in early trading to a high of \$84. The company plans to float in London later this year. Shares in Britain's other two big cable companies — Cable & Wireless Communications and Telewest — also made significant gains, rising 4 and 10 per cent respectively.

Barclay Knapp, president of NTL, said: "Microsoft believes in our vision of bringing advanced digital internet, telephone and television services to consumers and businesses throughout the UK."

Under the terms of the deal, Microsoft will buy convertible preferred stock in NTL, which is redeemable in cash or common stock ten years after its issue date. Microsoft will also receive 1.2 million five-year warrants to purchase NTL shares at \$84 per share, potentially taking the software giant's stake in the cable company up to 6.3 per cent. NTL said the software company's anti-trust battle with the US Government would not affect the deal.

Late last year, NTL said it was prepared to offer £160 million to buy Newcastle United Football Club.

Carphone Warehouse expects float

BY CHRIS AYRES



Dunstone store expansion

CHARLES DUNSTONE, the 34-year-old founder and managing director of The Carphone Warehouse, yesterday said a float of the mobile phone chain was "inevitable" as he announced the purchase of 270 Tandy electrical stores from InterTAN, the US company.

The deal, thought to be worth no more than £10 million, will allow The Carphone

Warehouse to cope with the enormous demand for pre-pay mobile phones, which has resulted in some of the company's customers waiting one and a half hours to be served.

"I got to the point in December when we could not have physically dealt with more sales," said Mr Dunstone, whose personal fortune is estimated at £25 million. "We were putting up with it, but it was far from what we wanted as a pur-

chasing experience. This deal will ease the pressure a little bit."

Mr Dunstone said he was aware he could realise a significant amount of money by floating The Carphone Warehouse during the current craze for mobile phones. However, he said that no City advisers had yet been appointed and that a flotation was unlikely this year.

Mr Dunstone said Tandy's management and brand would stay, but the stores would under-

go a £20 million facelift. He said Tandy could eventually see mobile phones take up to 50 per cent of sales, and would widen its product range to sell phones from all networks.

The combined group will have 450 stores across the UK and 139 on the Continent. The acquisition of Tandy will boost The Carphone Warehouse's estimated sales for the year to March 1999 from £250 million to more than £350 million.

Bankers Trust pays \$1.1bn in bonuses

FROM OLIVER AUGUST
IN NEW YORK

BANKERS TRUST paid out \$1.1 billion (£667 million) in bonuses excluding salaries last year, according to documents filed with the US Federal Reserve.

The payouts amount to more than 10 per cent of the \$10.1 billion market value of the bank and exceed Bankers Trust's 1998 profits of \$940 million. The bank previously said its total compensation bill for last year amounted to \$1.5 billion. Bankers Trust employs 2,400 in Britain, 1,000 of whom are in Edinburgh. The total workforce is 20,000.

The bonus bonanza has come to light in conjunction with the takeover by Deutsche Bank announced last year. Deutsche has traditionally operated a more austere pay regime than its Wall Street rivals. At the time of the takeover there was speculation that Deutsche Bank would attempt to push Bankers Trust bonuses down to cut costs.

Frank Newman, the executive chairman who will join Deutsche's board, was forced to send out a memo saying: "Until the merger closes, Bankers Trust will continue to operate independently and bonuses and promotions for 1998 will be approved in our normal process."

Mr Newman pledged to set aside \$400 million in "retention money" to keep key employees. Nevertheless, up to 5,500 jobs could be cut in an attempt to save \$1 billion per year after combining operations of the two banks in London and New York.

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Venture capitalists start to feel the pinch

3i's proposed £1 billion-plus takeover of Electra Investment Trust, its main rival in the UK's £40 billion venture capital market, comes as the demand for private equity shows the first signs of deterioration.

Although the British Venture Capital Association, the main industry body, will not publish 1998 figures until April, the consensus among market analysts is that the volume of larger deals has declined in the past six months.

Mike Wright, of the Centre for Management Buy-Out Research at the University of Nottingham, said last summer's crisis of confidence in world markets, coupled with the continued financial unrest in Latin America, has blunted investors' appetite for risk. More-

3i's offer for Electra is timely, says Richard Miles

ver, the huge weight of money in the market has pushed up the price of entry and inevitably led to a reduction in returns. So poor are the prospects say some analysts, that many institutions have indicated that they would like to withdraw from the market.

"There are a lot of funds in the market and few good, big deals. The second half of the year was bad for the mega-deals, say £100 million or above. But for the smaller deals, it's not too bad," Mr Wright said. If his analysis is correct, then the market circumstances lend weight to 3i's talks with Electra. 3i thrives on smaller private equi-

ty deals: its £2 billion plus portfolio consists of 3,200 distinct investments.

Electra, by comparison, says it has just 80 significant investments in unquoted companies. Electra Fleming — the 50-50 joint venture with Robert Fleming, the investment bank, that manages Electra — prefers to target larger deals. For example, it supported the Tote in its unsuccessful £375 million bid for Coral, the bookmaker.

3i's main strength, however, is that its shares trade at a substantial premium to net asset value — estimated at 17 per cent by some experts — while Electra traded at a similarly wide dis-

count, at least before yesterday's remarkable share gains after confirming 3i's "unsolicited" approach.

Rolly Crawford, ABN Amro's head of investment trusts, said 3i's significant premium would make a deal asset-enhancing for both sets of shareholders. He estimates that 3i shareholders would benefit by about 50p a share, while Electra investors would gain from the elimination of the discount.

Much has been made of how the proposed takeover would strengthen 3i's international operations — Electra has reinforced its continental network over the past few years — but in Mr

Crawford's view, that is no more than a minor consideration in the thinking of Brian Larcombe, chief executive.

Far more important is 3i's determination to remain in the FTSE 100 index and the benefits that such a position brings. A further £1 billion of assets would make the company safe from newcomers, and so help to preserve the premium on which it trades.

Of course, the deal may never get off the ground. Besides arguing about Electra's net asset value of £1.2 billion, Michael Stoddart, its chairman, is believed to be holding out for a premium on its underlying investments — even though it trades at such a wide discount.

Tempos, page 30

Chinese devaluation hint hits markets

By ALASDAIR MURRAY, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

SHARES in Hong Kong and China suffered big losses yesterday after the Chinese Government hinted that it may be the next major emerging economy to devalue its currency.

With Brazilian markets shut for a holiday, a fresh bout of market nerves was prompted by an article in the Chinese press arguing that devaluation may not prove too damaging for Asian economies. The article in the influential Chinese *Business Weekly* argued that the experience of Brazil suggested that "devaluation or

floating of the yuan would not definitely be a bad thing".

All Chinese newspapers are strictly controlled by the Government, and analysts said that publication of the piece suggested that a devaluation debate has begun within the Government.

However, suggestions that China is on the point of devaluation brought an immediate denial from the People's Bank of China, the country's central bank, which said that the article merely reflected a "private opinion" and that there had been no change in the Government's protective stance.

The report, however, took its toll on local markets, with analysts fearful that a devaluation would also force the Hong Kong dollar to abandon its US dollar peg and prompt another round of damaging competitive devaluations across Asia.

The Hang Seng index in Hong Kong fell 239.02, or 2.5 per cent, to close at 9,499.50. Sentiment was also harmed by figures that showed November retail sales in the special administrative region falling 20 per cent from a year earlier.

In Shanghai, the "B" share index, which is open to foreign investors, slipped 3.1 per cent to end at a record low. The Chinese market has also been under pressure since the collapse of Guangdong International Trust and Investment Corporation earlier this month.

Most analysts, however, said that China is under no immediate pressure to follow Brazil's example. Although export growth is faltering, China still runs a healthy trade surplus and has massive foreign reserves to protect its only partially convertible currency.

Growth figures cut back

FALLING interest rates, lower returns from shares and rising life expectancy have forced the investment industry to scale down its projections for growth (writes Marianne Curphey).

The PIA said the changes would affect the projections that salesmen use when selling life and pensions policies, and unit and investment trust savings schemes.

The PIA said that the rates will apply for new products from April 6 and for all business by June 30.

Projection rates were last changed in November 1993 and their use in the sales process is strictly regulated.



Marjorie Scardino, with Madame Tussaud's waxwork of Shakespeare, is selling businesses

Pearson's unwanted American activities put under hammer

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR

PEARSON, the media and information group, yesterday put up for sale a collection of American information businesses it does not want which have annual revenues of about \$250 million (£150 million).

The businesses, which include Jossey-Bass, specialists in management publishing, Appleton & Lange, which publishes medical texts and The Bureau of Business Practice, were all part of Pearson's \$4.6 billion acquisition last November of the Simon & Schuster education, reference and business and professional operations.

The seven businesses now being sold were to have formed part of a proposed sale of some of the Simon & Schuster activities to Hicks, Muse, Tate & Furst, the US private equity firm, for \$360 million. Hicks, Muse decided against going ahead with the purchase and Pearson bought the whole lot.

The UK company, whose chief executive is Marjorie Scardino, has decided to keep a couple of the businesses that were to have formed part of the Hicks, Muse purchase — in particular Macmillan Computer Publishing which will now form part of Pearson Education.

Pearson is also keeping the New York Institute of Finance which will become part of Pearson's newly created Management Education business.

The seven businesses, which are being sold, piece-meal and could fetch between \$300 million and \$350 million, include Macmillan General Reference, which publishes a full range of reference titles, and Macmillan Library Reference, which sells premium-priced quality reference materials to libraries and higher education institutions.

Pep sales stay strong

By SUSAN EMMETT

PRIVATE investors shrugged off market turmoil and continued to plough their cash into unit trusts and personal equity plans in 1998, according to a survey published yesterday.

Figures from the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds (AUTIF) showed that the amount of money invested in Peps and unit trusts rose by 16 per cent to £183 billion by the end of last year. Nearly two

million private investors saved £1.6 billion in 1998.

Peps, which will be replaced by individual savings accounts in April, accounted for more than 25 per cent of funds under management. Total Peps sales in 1998 reached a record £11 billion, up 18 per cent on the previous year.

Net retail sales of unit trusts in December were up 35 per cent on the previous year to

£596 million. Net retail Peps sales reached £368 million, a 30 per cent increase on 1997.

However, Philip Warland, director-general of AUTIF, questioned whether sales would have the same appeal. Mr Warland said: "Sales will be more complicated and people will have to be persuaded that they are like Peps. But I will be disappointed if the gross level of sales are not similar to this year."

Ford extends four-day week

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

FORD will today deliver a fresh blow to workers at its Dagenham plant, with a lengthy extension of its short-time working and a three-week closure over Easter.

Ford's Dagenham plant, which employs 4,400, has already completed the longest period of short-time working in recent industrial history. It has been working a four-day week since October. It will now continue until the end of March, a period that will then run into complete closure over Easter.

Ford will blame poor exports for the short-time working. Dagenham is its biggest UK factory, producing the Fiesta and relying heavily on the export market. Workers will be given either training or other duties during the short-time periods and will not suffer pay cuts.

But unions are concerned about continued uncertainty at the plant. Doug Collins, national officer at the AEEU,

said: "We need a long-term solution to this problem, not the piecemeal approach we have had up until now. Further short-time working will only increase insecurity and concern among the workforce. Four thousand and four hundred jobs depend on a decision to meet the problems in the long term."

Tony Woodley, chief negotiator for the T&G, said: "There is very intense competition in the marketplace, especially for cars such as the Fiesta. However, our members may be prepared to live with these cutbacks in the short term, we have to look to the long term."

Ford declined to comment. Today unions will press Rover not to close its only automotive components factory in South Wales. Rover said last week that the future of the Bargoed plant was uncertain. Forty-five jobs could go — nearly half of which are filled by disabled workers.

Banana row threat to jobs

By CARL MORTISHED

THOUSANDS of jobs in Scottish Borders woollen mills were hanging in the balance last night as diplomats wrangled in Geneva over the agenda at a World Trade Organisation meeting on the long-running banana dispute.

In a surprise move St Lucia, the Dominican Republic and Cote d'Ivoire blocked the US request for \$520 million (£315 million) of punitive tariffs against European exports. The US is claiming damages over the EU banana regime, which it claims applies illegal quotas in favour of Caribbean and African bananas. The three states to block the US request are members of the African Caribbean Pacific group of states favoured by the EU banana regime.

Failure to agree an agenda means that the meeting will reconvene this morning. But the US was last night still opposing a compromise put forward by Renzo Ruggiero, the WTO Di-

rector-General. Trade experts say failure to secure US agreement to the compromise could mean unilateral US sanctions from as early as February 3.

The sanctions requested by the US will hit an indiscriminate range of exports including Scottish cashmere knitwear, peccorino cheese, chandeliers and electric kettles.



Banana growers blocked US

Ericsson cuts 11% of staff

By CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

ERICSSON is cutting its workforce by 11 per cent worldwide in a bid to increase efficiency and restore its flagging profitability.

The Swedish telecoms manufacturer is cutting its 104,000 strong workforce by 11,000 and hopes to save \$K3 billion per year after completion of the two-year redundancy programme. The company refused to say how many of its 3,500 workers in the UK were threatened by redundancy.

Ericsson has a headquarters in Burgess Hill, West Sussex and owns a manufacturing facility in Lincolnshire. A profits warning in December highlighted the company's problem, both in public networks where it suffers from reduced demand for fixed telephony products and increased competition for business from state utilities. Furthermore, Ericsson's mobile phone business has suffered from the

surge in demand for cheap, pre-paid models.

A spokesman admitted yesterday that the jobs toll could get larger as Ericsson switched to buying in standardised equipment and technology. "There will certainly be further outsourcing," Ericsson said the job losses related to technological change, requiring the company to switch to less labour-intensive production methods and a smaller workforce.

Ericsson is facing a comprehensive technological shift. For example, all of Europe's large telecom networks are digitised today, and the next wave of investments will focus on Internet-based network structures.

The company said that 3,300 jobs would be lost in Sweden with the closure of production at a plant in Norrköping. The bulk of the 11,000 jobs to go worldwide will be in the network operators business, the core business serving large utilities.

UK facility to help Indonesian firms

A BRITISH rescue measure that is aimed at helping Indonesian businesses to survive the regional economic turmoil has finally been announced — months after other countries stepped in to provide assistance. The UK Government said yesterday that it will provide a multimillion-pound facility to encourage sales to Indonesian companies, overcoming the fear that the Indonesians may not be able to pay their bills.

Through its Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD), the Government will provide reinsurance that will allow private-sector credit insurers to resume the financing of British exports to Indonesia. The private sector had effectively placed the country on a short-term credit blacklist. Brian Wilson, Minister for Trade, said: "Indonesia has traditionally been one of Britain's major trading partners. Although the country is experiencing some serious economic difficulties at present, we remain hopeful that it will pull through before too long."

However, the United States, Australia and Japan put similar safeguards in place months ago. The ECGD spokesman admitted, The ECGD said that the UK deal had been held up partly by the Indonesian Government's reluctance to act as a guarantor for its firms. Short-term credit insurance used to be managed by the UK Government itself before a privatisation in 1991. The World Bank gave warning yesterday that political unrest in Indonesia was slowing down the pace of vital financial and corporate reform.

Freemove restructure

DIXONS, the electricals retail group, is setting up a subsidiary company to manage Freemove, its fast-growing Internet access business. John Clare, chief executive of Dixons, will chair Freemove Ltd, of which Mark Danby will be chief executive. Dixons' announcement earlier this month that it had attracted 900,000 users since its launch in September has led to a sharp rise in its share price. Another separate company, Dixons Group Retail Property Ltd, is being set up to manage the property portfolio, while the retail part of the group is to be divided into three divisions.

Hill Hire seeks £1.8m

HILL HIRE, the truck and trailer rental firm based in Bradford, yesterday announced the placing of almost 1.5 million new shares to raise approximately £1.8 million. These proceeds will be used to reduce the group's gearing, which stood at 180 per cent at the end of last year. After the placing, it will be reduced to approximately 160 per cent, which the company said was "a level which is within industry norms and which provides scope for future development". The company also said it expects to declare a final dividend of 3.2p per share in May.

P&O orders ferries

P&O, the transport group, has ordered the world's two largest and fastest cruise ferries from Fincantieri, the Italian yard, at a cost of £180 million. The cruise ferries, which will operate on the route between Rotterdam and Hull, will have a maximum speed of 22 knots, reducing the journey time by two-and-a-half hours. They will replace four vessels now operating that route, which will be deployed elsewhere. The ferries will be able to carry 1,360 passengers, have room for 250 cars and house a cinema and business centre.

Thomson buys chain

THOMSON TRAVEL GROUP has increased its high-street presence by buying the Callers-Pegasus retail chain for £17 million. The deal, to be earnings enhancing this year, brings TTTG a business with 34 travel shops in northeast England, a flight centre in Newcastle and a small tour operator, Focus Holidays. In the year to October 31, it sold almost 200,000 air-inclusive tours, reporting profits before tax and exceptional of £1.1 million. TTTG said its acquisition is to be run on a standalone basis alongside its 800-strong Lunn Poly chain.

Trafficmaster link

TRAFFICMASTER, the traffic information supplier, has formed a £1 million joint venture with the Royal Automobile Club to develop a range of network services for motorists, including navigation assistance, public transport details and access to breakdown services. Trafficmaster and the RAC will inject £500,000 each into the venture, called RAC Trafficmaster Telematics. Bill McIntosh, finance director of Trafficmaster, said the deal was expected to be earnings neutral for his company this year.

Wintrust earnings rise

WINTRUST, the merchant banking group, has reported a 10.5 per cent rise in net earnings to £1.47 million for the six months to September 30. Richard Spiro, chairman, said yesterday that Wintrust had benefited from the bigger institutions' warning interest in debt packages of less than £10 million, opening the door to smaller lenders. He said this had been crucial in insulating Wintrust against the downturn in many sectors. Earnings per share rose to 14.59p (13.28p). There is an interim dividend of 5.35p (4.94p).

HR Owen's £2m buy

HR OWEN, the car dealer, has bought Bradshaw Webb, a Mercedes-Benz dealership, for £2.2 million in shares and cash. Bradshaw Webb, a franchised dealership based in Chislesea and Wandsworth, will add to Owen's three Mercedes-Benz businesses, which trade as Malaya. In 1997, Bradshaw Webb had consolidated losses of £105,966, and net assets of £122,781. It is 75 per cent owned by Colin Giltrap, Owen's non-executive deputy chairman, who receives £1.1 million of new shares, lifting his Owen stake from 4.2 per cent to 8.5 per cent.

Glenmorangie deal

GLENMORANGIE, the Scotch whisky producer, has joined forces with LVMH, the French luxury goods and drinks group, to develop its business in China. LVMH has paid \$1.2 million (£725,000) in return for a 39 per cent stake in Glenmorangie's existing joint venture, set up in 1992 to distribute its Glenmorangie and Highland Queen brands as well as J. Man Yung, a locally produced white spirit. As a result, the Scottish group's stake is reduced from 60 per cent to 39 per cent and its Chinese partner emerges with 22 per cent.

Gremlin in takeover talks

TAKEOVER fever gripped the British computer games sector yesterday as Gremlin, producer of titles such as *Men in Black*, revealed that it was in bid talks with "a number of interested parties", thought to include Electronic Arts of the US (Chris Ayres writes).

Shares of Gremlin, which recently disappointed the market with a profits warning, rose 26p to 100p, leaving the company valued at £19 million.

Industry sources said other potential bidders for Gremlin could include Havas, the media arm of Vivendi, the French conglomerate.

Sears

The article on the takeover of Sears by J11 (*Business News*, January 22) did not take proper account of a 10 for 1 share consolidation and, as a result, gave incorrect valuations for outstanding share options. Sears has asked us to point out the options will not generate any profits.

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Cyprus Cyp £	0.8777	0.8082	
Denmark Kr	11.26	10.37	
Egypt	5.85	5.24	
Finland Mk	9.09	8.34	
France F	9.89	9.11	
Germany DM	2.971	2.729	
Greece Dr	4.883	4.449	
Hong Kong \$	13.68	12.48	
Iceland	127	107	
Indonesia	18952	13952	
Israel P	1.2821	1.0961	
Japan Yen	7.12	6.46	
Italy Lira	2954	2717	
Japan Yen	204.10	186.57	
Malta	0.564	0.605	
Netherlands Gld	3.355	3.080	
New Zealand \$	3.24	3.00	
Norway Kr	12.85	12.61	
Portugal Esc	300.38	278.39	
Spain Ptas	10.95	9.70	
Sweden Kr	250.37	231.58	
Switzerland Fr	13.62	12.52	
Turkey Lira	2.449	2.231	
USA \$	35.953	32.923	
UK £	1.75	1.622	

Notes: For small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Bank of England. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

US costs

Monty can do without a Blank check



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

The shenanigans at Mirror Group would make the most hardened of tabloid journalists squirm. The chairman and chief executive of a public company have been shuffling it out through the columns of the press in a manner generally only employed by Government ministers and their anonymous spokesmen.

Surely the time has come for the soothing voice of a spin doctor to persuade both parties that this undignified behaviour is doing nothing for the image of either of them. While there may be some supporters of each who are enjoying the spectacle, and even encouraging it, the majority of shareholders must be concerned about the implications for the country, or at least their company and their investment in it.

Sir Victor Blank strode into Mirror Group last year and was, apparently, far from impressed by what he found as he turned the pages. He rightly stamped his foot on plans for an expensive launch of *Sporting Life*, which was to have proceeded without adequate research into the marketplace. Relations with his chief executive have, perhaps not surprisingly, failed to prosper ever since.

David Montgomery may not be the ideal chief executive to take Mirror forward but, to outside spectators, now may not be the ideal moment to dispense

with his services. Whether Mirror eventually lands with Trinity or Regional Independent Media or any other suitor, the likelihood is that it will first have to undergo the months of uncertainty necessitated by a Monopolies Commission inquiry. Someone will have to run the business during that time. John Allwood, the former finance director now running Mirror's regional titles, might be perfectly able to slip into the role, but that would leave his chair to fill. An MMC inquiry is not the easiest environment in which to recruit top talent and it also makes enormous demands on the team that is in situ. Mirror may benefit from maintaining the status quo a little longer.

That, of course, would not be easy, given the depths to which relations appear to have sunk. But while the calls for Monty's head have been loud they have not been unanimous. Some shareholders may be bemused by the way in which Trinity assumed most favoured bidder status despite an offer which appeared to value Mirror at rather less than the Candover-backed cash from RIM.

With the executive directors

now caught in the cross-fire, the atmosphere at Mirror's Canary Wharf headquarters may now have been soured too much for any compromise to be possible. But if Sir Victor and Mr Montgomery were able to shake hands and declare a cease fire, it could be to the benefit of shareholders and staff.

Then the bidders could be left to get on with the fighting.

Bank on Don to take a gap year

Donald Cruickshank has the awesome responsibility of making sure that the dawn of the new millennium does not wreak havoc across the nation. That is hardly enough to keep a former telecoms regulator fully occupied: Mr Cruickshank only needs two days a week to beat the bug. Now he has found another little task to fill another

couple of days each week: he is going to sort out Britain's banks.

Banks tend to feature high on the hit list of most governments, being a favourite subject for consumer gripes. If the time is not right to hit them with a windfall tax, then a tough-sounding inquiry is not a bad alternative.

Mr Cruickshank has at least found some new avenues of investigation to pursue alongside the inevitable inquest into whether or not the banks are failing in their duty to provide finance for small firms. The 'equity gap' is the abominable snowman of the financial world, an elusive beast which some otherwise sane individuals will insist exists despite all evidence to the contrary. Mr Cruickshank's quest for the mythical gap is going to take him to Germany, France and the United States to see whether it is still in existence in those countries.

But before he concludes that it is thriving in London, he should seek confirmed sightings rather than mere anecdotal evidence. We all know that James Dyson encountered the gap, or something very similar to it, when he tried to launch his vacuum cleaner but where are the other victims? Multimillionaire Mr Dyson does not seem too badly scarred by the experience.

Indeed, since he succeeded in maintaining ownership of his business rather than handing over large chunks of equity in return for funding, he could be said to have benefited from his original difficulties in raising funding for his project.

Mr Cruickshank is more likely to dig up ammunition against the banks when he wanders away from the equity gap to look at the issues surrounding credit card handling and the payments demanded of retailers for this service. The larger organisations such as supermarkets can look after themselves when it comes to agreeing terms with the operating networks but

smaller businesses have long resented the charges.

Mr Cruickshank is also suspicious of the way banks aim to bundle their products together. They like to dress it up as offering additional services to customers but it does not always feel that way.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained

The provision of equity capital is the *raison d'être* of 3i, and it has a good record of spotting winners. However much research goes into deciding to back one of the hundreds of companies that trek to 3i's Waterloo offices every year, there is also an element of luck and of good timing in the venture capital industry.

Clearly, in its approach to Electra, 3i was hoping it had both on its side. The idea of the bid is rooted more in opportunism than enormous synergies. Electra is responding accordingly, making clear that its response will not be based on principle but on price. If Brian Larcombe thinks that he can pick up Electra at a wide discount to net assets, then he is being something of an optimist. If

Michael Stoddart thinks that a venture capital business can command a chunky premium to assets in this sort of climate, then he is sharing the pink spectacles.

Electra is operating in an increasingly competitive market. Its reluctance to join the dizzy rush to chase up prices for big deals has left it looking somewhat laid-back of late. Far better that than to be suffering the after effects now being experienced by CinVen as it realises that rivals were right to marvel at the price it was prepared to pay for magazine publisher IPC.

Bringing Electra on board would bolster 3i and give it the weight to ensure its continuing presence in the FTSE 100. But its assets may also appeal to other wealthy venture capitalists in search of a deal.

Bleak House

AFTER the extraordinarily rapid demise of Sears, the hunt is on for the next retail takeover target. Anyone expecting it to be House of Fraser is heading for disappointment. There are better bargains to be found in the stores than in HoF shares. Despite the recent, relatively bullish, trading statement from the company, Fraser does not offer the neat break-up potential that Philip Green will quickly extract at Sears. The Fayed brothers knew what they were doing when they sold HoF and kept Harrods.

Renamed Lonrho to pursue £1bn merger

By Jason Nasse

Lonrho, which is to change its name to Lonmin after shedding all but its mining businesses in the last year, is to pursue a £1 billion merger with Implats, the South African platinum group, if European regulators allow it.

The European Court has been considering an appeal by

Implats against a ruling two years ago which effectively stopped Implats' parent company at the time, Anglo American, from taking a 30 per cent stake in Lonrho. Anglo's voting rights were restricted and it eventually sold the stake back to Lonrho at a loss last year. Implats retains a 27 per cent

stake in Lonrho Platinum, the largest and most profitable part of Lonrho after the restructure.

Sir John Craven, Lonrho's chairman, said yesterday that Lonrho either wants to pursue a merger with Implats, so creating the world's second-largest platinum miner, or else buy out the minority stake in Lon-

rho Platinum, a deal that could cost Lonrho up to £100 million.

"When the outcome of the [European Court] case is heard, we will then go into discussions with Implats," said Sir John.

The cleaning up of the relationship with Implats is the largest outstanding issue in the process of reshaping Lonrho which has been going on for the past two years.

Last year Lonrho sold its hotels operations, demerged its African trading side and expanded Duker, the coalminer in which it has a 70 per cent stake, through a merger with its rival, Tavistock.

Sir John also ruled out selling the company's 33 per cent stake in Ashanti, the Ghanaian gold mining business, saying it gave the company a useful insight into the gold business.

The strength of platinum — caused by demand for its use in catalytic converters and worries about supplies from Russia — boosted Lonrho's results in the year to September 30.

Profits from continuing operations rose from £49 million to £81 million. Pre-tax profits fell from £196 million to £84 million, but these figures were distorted by a combination of profits from the sale of businesses and the £69 million write-off of the group's investment in Hondo, a gas exploration venture.

Earnings per share, before exceptional items, rose from 24.4p to 41.5p and a final dividend of 10p makes a total of 17.2p.



Sir John Craven ruled out selling the company's stake in Ashanti, the Ghanaian business

Tempus, page 20

Chrysalis pays £5.4m for Global

By Chris Ayres

THE music publisher owning the rights to such hits as The Jacksons' *Don't Blame It On the Boogie*, has been bought by Chrysalis, the media group headed by Chris Wright.

Global Music Group, a German company set up more than 30 years ago by Peter Kirsten, owns 15,000 local and international copyrights. It also has sub-publishing agreements for music by artists including Elvis Presley.

Chrysalis will pay £5.4 million for Global, of which £2.7 million will be covered by issuing 413,699 shares.

Global will change its name to Global Chrysalis Music. Mr Kirsten will sign a two-year contract to become managing director.

Bid approach boosts LIG

By Paul Durman

LONDON International Group, the manufacturer of Durex condoms, has received an unsolicited approach that may lead to a £550 million takeover.

Shares in LIG, which were strong on Friday, jumped a further 35p to 163.4p, a price that values the company at almost £570 million.

Ansell Healthcare and Carter-Wallace, the leading American condom-makers, were regarded as the most likely bidders.

LIG said that talks with the potential bidder were at a very early stage.

A spokesman for the company said: "It's very preliminary. We are not asking to be taken over. We've stated that

we've on course to go back to double-digit growth next year. Why sell the company at this low level?"

Shares in LIG reached 231p last July but by last week they had halved in value. This followed the company's December profits warning, necessitated by production problems at a medical gloves factory in Alabama and the impact of cheap Asian imports.

Under Nick Hodges, the chief executive, LIG has recovered from its problems in the early 1990s to concentrate on condoms and the premium end of the medical gloves market. It recently launched Durex in the US in an effort to create a global brand.

Shortage of engineers at Filtronic

FILTRONIC, the telecoms electronics company, berated the lack of suitably qualified technicians yesterday (writes Robert Cole).

Professor David Rhodes, chairman, said the company was suffering from a shortage of electronic engineers up to PhD level.

Filtronic supplies electronic gadgetry to the makers of mobile phone handsets and base transmission stations.

Pre-tax profits for the half year to November 30 were 14 per cent ahead at £5.8 million but before interest payments the operating profit was £8.9 million against £5.4 million. Earnings per share fell back to 7.1p from 7.3p, because the company issued shares to help pay for an acquisition.

Tempus, page 30

US costs to impact on Haynes

By Matthew Barbour

HAYNES PUBLISHING, the motor repair manuals producer, has warned shareholders that profits over the coming year will be reduced because of the financial burden of increasing its share of the US market.

The group, whose manuals account for almost all car repair book sales in Britain, said it has now increased its share of the American market from 60 to 80 per cent.

The announcement came as it posted reduced first-half pre-tax profits of £2.4 million (£2.5 million) on turnover down at £13.2 million (£13.4 million).

John Haynes, chairman, said: "Sometimes you have to take a knock on the nose to help yourself in the long term and that is what we have done. We're a tough company and I hope our shareholders understand that we're investing in our future."

Over the course of the past six months, Haynes has replaced its most significant US competitor in two retail chains, comprising more than 1,100 stores.

In the six months to November 30, profits in North America, which fell by 17 per cent, were adversely affected when one large customer ceased trading and a strike hit its paper supplies.

However, pre-tax profits in the UK and Europe exceeded market expectations, rising 43 per cent despite a shortfall in sales in the second quarter. Mr Haynes said the group had benefited from improved margins and production efficiencies gained from printing more of the manuals in-house.

Mr Haynes said the group planned to continue expanding its European and South American operations over the coming year.

Earnings per share were down to 9.3p (9.8p), while the interim dividend has been maintained at 5.8p. Shares in Haynes fell 7.5p to 177.5p.

Monsoon's shares hit by fall in profit

By Sarah Cunningham

MONSOON, the clothing retailer that floated last year, reported a sharp drop in interim profits yesterday, causing its shares to slide to a new low.

Pre-tax profits in its half year to November 28 fell from £14.97 million to £11.82 million. Like-for-like sales in the half were down 6 per cent, and in the following seven weeks they fell 9 per cent.

Monsoon shares closed down 9p at 46.5p. The company was floated at 198p a share last February, when Peter Simon, its founder, sold 25 per cent of the company.

After fully diluted earnings per share of 4.4p (5.65p pro forma), the company will pay a 1.5p maiden interim dividend.

Andrew May, finance director, said that despite the "trading" share price, there was no thought of taking the company private again.

Field the target of second US packaging group

By Matthew Barbour

FIELD GROUP, the specialist packaging company, has become the object of a tug-of-war between two rival US bidders after Shorewood Packaging said it was considering mounting a challenge to last week's £194 million takeover offer from Chesapeake.

Following yesterday's announcement, shares in Field, which rose 23p to 316.5p on Thursday after Chesapeake announced its 320p bid, rose a further 21p to close at 337.5p.

Directors of Field, who sent an offer document to shareholders on Friday recommending Chesapeake's offer, yesterday advised shareholders to take no action until details of a new counter-bid had been made clear.

Shorewood, which is listed on the New York Stock Ex-

change, specialises in producing packaging for the computer, software, cosmetics and toiletries, food and home entertainment markets in North America and China. It is thought to have been attracted to Field's strength in the European pharmaceutical packaging market. Field also has strong market positions in drinks and tobacco packaging, although these businesses have been hit by exposure to the economic turmoil in the Far East.

Field has 16 factories in the UK, including sites in Nottingham, Portsmouth, East Kilbride, Newcastle and Thatcham. Shares of Field have fallen over the past 12 months in reaction to a decline in first-half profits and a warning on trading.

Internet deals soar to \$145bn

INTERNET-RELATED deals last year totalled \$145 billion (£88 billion), or 30 per cent of all technology merger and acquisition activity worldwide (Raymond Snoddy writes).

The value rose almost tenfold, from \$16.1 billion in 1997, according to the annual M&A report of Broadview International, the merchant bank specialising in information technology and media.

Most deals — \$95 in 1998, against \$39 in 1997 — were in North America, but the European total rose from 87 deals in 1997 to 137 last year.

Values of mergers involving Internet components that bridged the gap between telecommunications and software and hardware went through the roof.

Victor Basta, of Broadview, said: "1998 was the year the Internet became a consumer phenomenon."

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SKIPTON SHARE DEALING SERVICES	0800 138 0800



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STOCK MARKET



FRASER NELSON

Takeovers make traders forget Chinese turmoil

LONDON shares rebounded from heavy early losses as a fresh wave of takeovers helped the City to forget its fears of a financial crisis in China.

In the first half hour of trading, the FTSE 100 index fell almost 120 points on word that China would devalue the yuan and trigger a meltdown in Asian currencies.

But after LucasVarity, Electra IT and London International Group confirmed bid approaches, the bulls returned to help the index close up 19.7 to 5880.9.

LucasVarity's secret was out early on. Its shares closed up 294p to 244p — but trading had closed before it admitted a 280p-a-share approach.

Electra IT is still discussing its price, but its shares added 119p to 682p — capitalising the company at £1.18 billion.

London International, which was firmly denying widespread rumours of a takeover approach on Friday, changed its tune in the afternoon and trumpeted an "unsolicited proposal".

Some dealers expect a bid at 160p a share; its shares added 35p to 163p.

So who could be next? Speculation surrounded Allied Irish Banks, 25p better at £12.30. Talk centres around Deutsche Bank with a £14.50 a share bid, and some are convinced that the bid will come through by the end of this week.

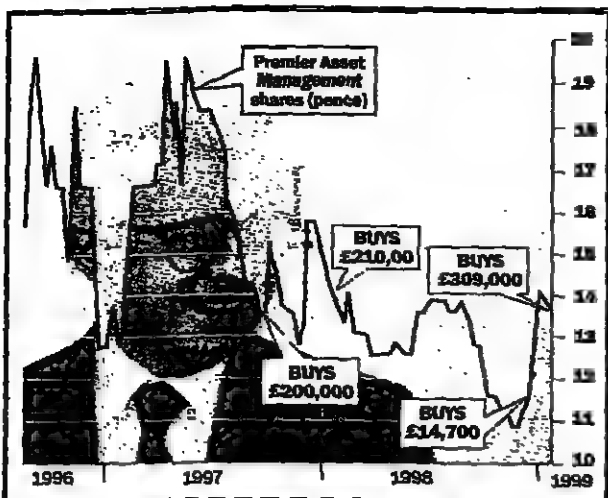
There was plenty of interest in the hotel sector following our report on Saturday that Ladbroke, 4p off at 215p, has been talking to Stakis, 14p harder at 106p. There are also suggestions that it is keeping an eye on Vaux, 11p better at 244p.

Shares of Thistle were off 6p at 106p ahead of today's trading statement, which is expected to disappoint.

Recent whispers of a big acquisition by Granada, 51p better at £10.14, were dampened as it emerged that the media and hospitality group has just cancelled credit lines of almost £400 million.

A City source said: "You can guarantee it would not be cancelling them if it had a big deal up its sleeve."

House of Fraser was up another 8p to 92p. Shami Ahmed, the man behind Joe Bloggs, is reported to be making a bid for the company, but his fans were yesterday bailing out. They believe he is baulking at the share price.



Lord Stevens of Ludgate, chairman of United News & Media, has built up a 12.5 per cent stake in Premier Asset Management

now 80 per cent above last month's low. Range Software shares leapt 20 per cent to 144p on confirmation that it is in talks with Microsoft about licensing Ruid Gullis's Striker, its latest game. Its shares were among the most heavily traded, with 28.6 million changing hands against an average daily volume of 2.1 million. Deal-

ers point out that at yesterday's price, the shares are still 104p — or 42 per cent — off the high achieved in 1995. Some see Range as a prime takeover candidate.

Its rise was made easier by rival Grenada Group, which said it had received a takeover approach. This helped its shares 26p to 100p.

This put the market in a mood to have a flutter on other computer companies — so cue another 31 per cent rise in On-Line. The computer games company is now at 1274p — far from its 124p level earlier this month.

One dealer said: "On-line is so small that an early deal of 2,000 shares is enough to move the price. When it's moving up, everyone piles in."

Premier Asset Management, an £11 million AIM-listed stockbroker, has been attracting attention recently — mainly because Lord Stevens of Ludgate, chairman of United News & Media, has been ploughing a substantial chunk of his personal fortune into the shares.

The company has £320 million under management, and hopes to increase this to £1 billion within three years. Lord Stevens is its non-executive chairman and must fancy its chances.

Earl Cairns, chairman of Allied Zurich, has also spent £93,300 of his own cash in shares of the newly listed insurer at 933p apiece. They added 9p to 915p yesterday.

Lady in Leisure looked in distress yesterday, falling another 27p to 95p. It transpired that Scott Campbell, its co-founder and until last Friday its managing director, has sold his remaining £625,000 stake at 100p a share.

His friends and former colleagues did their best to mop them back up, but only took £445,000 at the same price.

But the dealers were still suspicious that Mr Campbell should sell at 100p when the shares were 180p a few weeks ago.

Arden Leisure has been a peculiar little mover of late. Two weeks ago, its shares were 11p apiece. They have been bounding up ever since, another 24p firmer to 164p yesterday — a move dealers are unable to explain.

□ GILT-EDGED: Comments by Eddie George that rates would rise if consumer confidence recovers sent a chill through the futures pit. Treasury 10 per cent 2001 slid 0.16 to 110.19 and Treasury 6 per cent 2028 fell back 0.79 to 130.03.

□ NEW YORK: US blue chips fell, dogged by worries about earnings and Brazil. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 33.47 points to 9,087.20.

After a sharp fall in the Hang Seng index, London's banking sector was sure to take a beating yesterday. News of the UK Government's investigation into retail banking pushed the sector further into retreat and six of the worst ten FTSE 100 fallers were banks.

The risers were a mix of big targets, telecoms companies (rebounding from Friday's mini-crash) and, of course, the supermarkets.

Whenever investors bailed out of the financial sector, they rush straight for the

dowdy old "safety" stocks, such as food producers and UK-based leisure and transport stocks.

In the past 12 months, the sea-saw relationship between the banking and food retailing sectors has worked more harmoniously than ever — with the two moving in almost perfect symmetry.

The current gap suggests that the supermarkets have swung too far down, and may recover considerable ground before their reporting season starts.

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New York (midday):

Dow Jones 9857.20 (-31.47)

S&P Composite 1222.78 (-1.79)

Tokyo 14238.81 (+54.47)

Hong Kong 9592.50 (-284.00)

Amsterdam 325.35 (+4.80)

Sydney 2579.9 (-20.5)

Frankfurt 4982.43 (-36.83)

Singapore 1258.12 (-40.74)

Brussels 3364.86 (-18.51)

Paris 4260.80 (+31.47)

Zurich 1157.7 (-4.40)

S&P 500 1157.7 (-4.40)

FTSE 100 5880.9 (+19.7)

FTSE 250 3332.2 (+4.1)

FTSE 1000 2725.3 (+14.8)

FTSE All-Share 2725.3 (+14.8)

FTSE Non-Financial 2725.3 (+14.8)

FTSE Financial 2725.3 (+14.8)

FTSE Food Sector 2725.3 (+14.8)

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Brazil is not being offered the correct medicine

Britain's recovery after leaving the ERM is a better example of how to react after devaluation

Statistically, it may be the eighth-biggest economy in the world but, as General De Gaulle once said: "Brazil is not a serious country." The absence of seriousness was demonstrated not so much in the Brazilian Government's inability to stick to its core economic pledge to avoid a devaluation. The real lack of seriousness has been shown in the Brazilian Government's and the world's response.

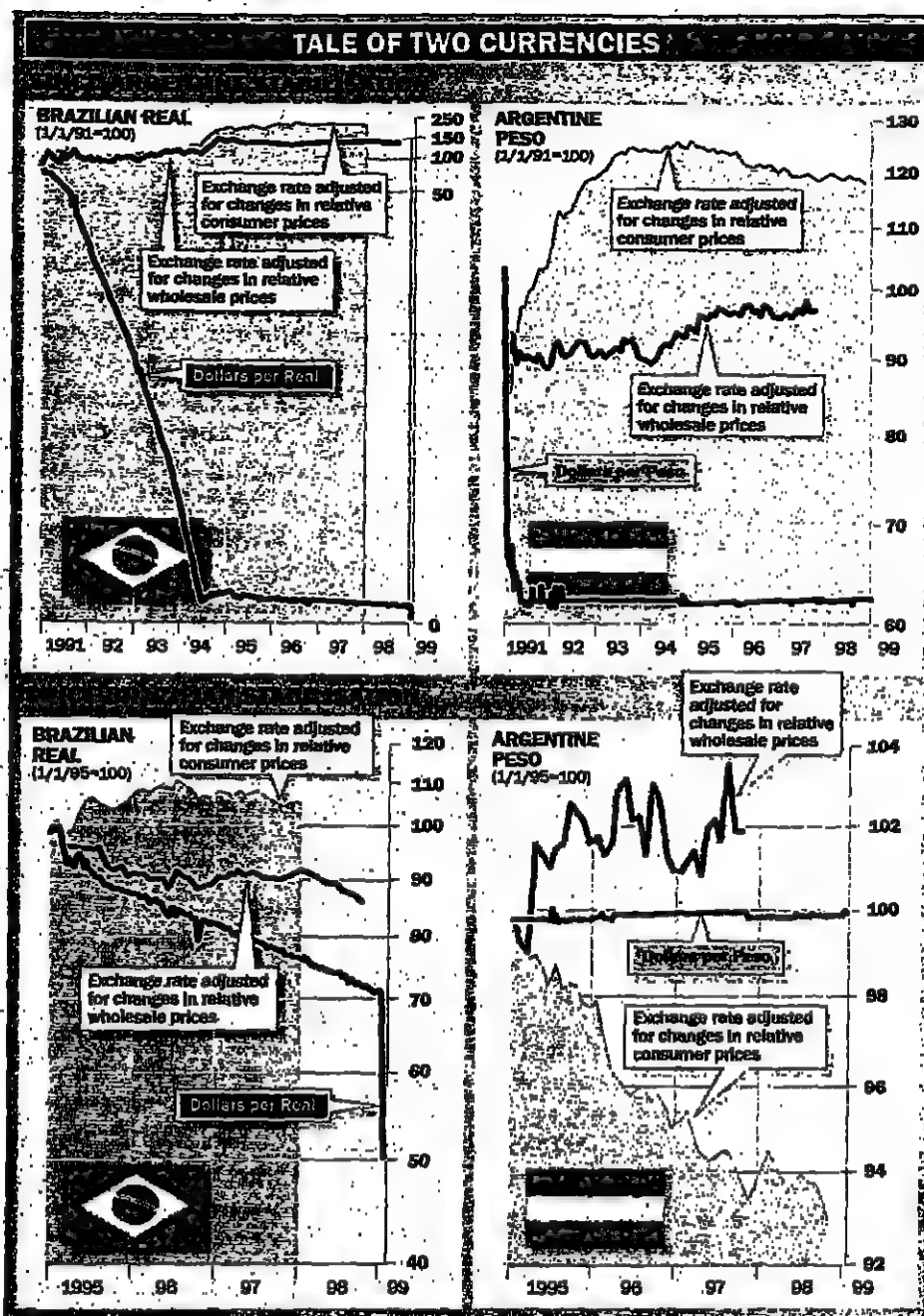
The question about Brazil that preoccupies most economic commentators at present is whether the financial meltdown will now engulf other countries that rely on exchange-rate links, ranging from Argentina to Hong Kong and China. Others ask whether the success of Argentina and Hong Kong in defending their currency pegs implies that other countries such as Brazil, and perhaps Indonesia and Russia, should follow them in abandoning national currencies and simply adopting the dollar, the euro or the yen.

But these questions are beside the point. Argentina and Hong Kong are both in a totally different category from Brazil. They totally abandoned their monetary autonomy by guaranteeing that every currency note that they issue is backed by a dollar held at the central bank. More importantly, they have created the two key conditions under which a currency board of this type can work: they have rigorously controlled their government borrowing; and they have convinced their citizens that there can be no benefit whatsoever in having a national monetary policy independent of the dictates of the US Federal Reserve. In Argentina, the Government has been able to achieve this through a constitutional revolution after decades of economic chaos and violent dictatorship.

In Hong Kong, the case has been easier to make, simply on the grounds that Hong Kong is a tiny open economy far too small to derive any real benefits from managing its own currency and setting its own interest rates.

These conditions simply do not apply in Brazil. Like Russia and Indonesia, Brazil is much more politically unruly, much larger and much less exposed to foreign trade than either Argentina or Hong Kong. It also has a government that is much worse at collecting taxes and living within its means.

It is the Brazilian Government's post-devaluation policy that represents the really serious dimension of this crisis — and illustrates the lack of seriousness, both in the world's approach. Nobody can blame Brazil for having failed to defend its exchange rate in the



middle of a global financial crisis and a deep domestic recession. Similar challenges have repeatedly overwhelmed far richer and more sophisticated economies, ranging from Korea in 1997 to Britain, Italy and Sweden in 1992 and France in 1983. In fact nobody outside the International Monetary Fund and the US Treasury was much surprised by the collapse of Brazil's exchange rate policy on January 13 and the real's 30 per cent devaluation. The absence of any surprise was well demonstrated by the relatively calm financial reaction around the world.

Why, then, do I say that Brazil is not behaving, or being treated, as a serious country? Because the IMF and the US Treasury are acting in a fundamentally, frivolous manner — pushing the Brazilian Government towards a literally incredible and wrongheaded economic framework that is almost guaranteed to collapse. After the ERM traumas of 1992 in Italy, Scandinavia and Britain and the more recent currency crises in Asia, a few general lessons about devaluations should surely have been learnt.

The three most important principles of a post-devaluation policy can be readily stated by anyone who recalls the rapid economic recovery after White Wednesday in Britain.

The first principle is that the Government must never raise interest rates or waste foreign exchange reserves in trying to "defend" a currency which the markets have already succeeded in knocking off a previously established peg. The second is that the only right way to control inflation, in such circumstances is to set out and implement a credible plan for reducing the public sector's budget deficit in a gradual but deliberate way. The third and most important principle is that stability can be restored in only one way in a country where financial and economic confidence has been completely shattered: by reviving economic growth and creating a clear prospect of rising profitability and falling unemployment.

Unfortunately, the Brazilian authorities, apparently under pressure from the IMF and the US Treasury, are turning all these principles on their head. Instead of cutting interest rates immediately after the devaluation, they have raised them from 30 per cent to even more absurd levels of 50 per cent and above. Instead of accepting the inevitable — that the real will fall well below any reasonable definition of "fair value" before rebounding on the foreign exchanges — Brazil

has been wasting anything up to \$1 billion of reserves every day in a futile attempt to prevent it from falling "too far". Instead of seizing the opportunity presented by a national crisis to restructure the tax and public spending system and put the public finances on a sustainable footing, they are trying to rush through piecemeal emergency measures with questionable political support.

Brazil is, according to World Bank figures, the world's most unequal and lightly taxed leading economy. The richest 10 per cent of the population receive 47 per cent of the country's total income, and taxes amount to just 19 per cent of GDP.

What Brazil needs to achieve a convincing stabilisation is a fundamental restructuring of its fiscal systems designed to create government surpluses after the economy recovers and to ensure the political acceptability of sound finances by turning taxes and public spending into instruments of modest redistribution. Instead of mechanisms for impoverishing the already poor.

Finally, and most urgently, a post-devaluation economic policy has to create a confident expectation of economic growth. And the only way of achieving that in an economy paralysed by interest rates of 50 per cent plus is by aggressive monetary

easing. As Lombard Street Research, the economic consultancy based in London, noted last week in a despairing analysis of Brazilian policy: "The starting point of new policy is not fiscal consolidation and devaluation but fiscal consolidation and aggressive monetary easing. The real should be set free to find its own equilibrium level. Extremely low inflation (running at only 0.5 per cent a year in December) means that Brazil can afford to pursue this line of defence."

The Government, however, has so far been doing exactly the opposite. By simultaneously raising interest rates and raising taxes it has been sending a powerful signal to consumers, businessmen and foreign investors that the Brazilian economy will continue to fall steeply in the year ahead.

In short, far from restoring financial confidence or increasing political support for its stabilisation measures, the Government, with the IMF and the US Treasury looking over its shoulder, is virtually guaranteeing a succession of economic and political crises stretching as far ahead as the eye can see.

Why have Brazilian policymakers seized so firmly the wrong end of the stick? Why have they been pushed so enthusiastically down the road to financial perdition by the IMF and US Treasury? It cannot be a misunderstanding about economics. Even the Ivory-tower officials at the IMF must surely realise that a falling currency cannot be "defended" by raising interest rates. They must be aware that an exchange-rate peg cannot simply be replaced with another at a lower level after the very principle of pegging is seen to have failed. An interest rate of 100 per cent a year offers no attraction to investors who know that the value of their principal could be devalued by 30 per cent in a day.

As Richard Medley, the New York economic consultant, has noted, there has been only one example in living memory of a currency successfully defended with high interest rates: the Mexican peso after the 1995 crisis. "And that only worked because the US Government said to investors: take massively high interest rates and we will guarantee you repayment."

Perhaps economic officials are so reluctant to let Brazil cut interest rates and allow the real to find its own level because, deep down, they believe that Brazil is still not a "serious country". They do not believe that Brazil's low inflation could possibly be sustainable and therefore they do not want it to follow the example set by Britain in 1992. But unless the US Treasury is willing to undertake and pay for another Mexican-style bailout, the international economic community will soon have to come up with a different approach to the crisis in Brazil. Maybe they will have to start treating Brazil in the same way as any other serious country — a good example to start with would be Britain's experience after White Wednesday.

Millennium gap separates firms from consumers



JASON NISSE

As the rather irritating clock overlooking Blackfriars Bridge in London tells you, there are only 339 days left to the millennium. However, many of us seem to be suffering from new era inertia already. Ask most people what the millennium means to them and, high on the list of answers, will be the replies "a computer bug" or "a dome in Greenwich".

Given this mixture of apathy and hostility, it is a little difficult to use the millennium as a marketing tool. Companies that have listened to some over-trendy lawyer from a design agency talking about the new era being a time for re-birth and cleansing will realise that there could be a perception gap between what consumers want and what marketers plan to give them.

That is why research being released this week from The Brand Futures Consultancy, the subsidiary of Grey Communications that specialises in marketing strategy, is timely and welcome. Brand Futures' *Opportunity Millennium*, as it is called, took the trouble to quiz 2,000 consumers and 149 directors of companies with turnover of £20 million or more about how they think companies should mark the millennium.

The results are quite startling. The overwhelming reaction from consumers is that companies should mark the new era by "putting something back into the community". The questionnaire suggested a number of different ways of marking the millennium. Obviously, if you ask someone whether they like world peace they will say yes. But even accepting that, there was a great deal of enthusiasm about potential charitable acts by corporations.

Suggestions that companies should help future generations with grants to schools and youth clubs had 90 per cent of people agreeing, and 70 per cent agreeing strongly. Funding libraries and crèches gained almost as enthusiastic a response, while other suggestions that were popular were providing "a product or service to help to make our lives easier or less stressful in the future" and offering ways to learn new skills and abilities.

Of more interest to businesses is the statistic that 65 per cent of respondents would be more likely to use a company's products and services if they did mark the millennium with one of these charitable acts (this percentage rose to 74 per cent in the 35-54 age group).

However, there is some cynicism as to whether the companies will follow their advice. Asked how they reckoned that the millennium will be marked by corporations, 48 per cent of consumers expect there to be lots of special offers and promotions while only 14 per cent expect the kind of good acts that they rather hope the companies will carry out.

So over to the companies, which were asked what sort of "millennium-marking activities" are now being planned. Not surprisingly, 76 per cent immediately mentioned setting up a task force to deal with the year 2000 computer bug (which makes one wonder what the other 24 per cent are doing about the bug). Next came running an internal communications programme to ex-

plaining the company's vision for the new era, which is being conducted by 27 per cent of firms. Then came planning how the company and its brands would develop beyond the millennium, mentioned by 14 per cent of companies.

Only 11 per cent mentioned the charitable acts wanted by consumers, the same number as mentioned the dreaded millennium brands that the consumers fear. Simon Ratcliffe, who, with Clive Cooper, runs Brand Futures, said that there appears to be a gap between what consumers want and what companies are going to do. Some, though, have realised that if they use the millennium merely as a blatant marketing device, they will be caught out. BT, Tesco, Marks & Spencer and Walkers Snacks are among the companies that have already started some form of community initiative for the millennium, and Brand Futures is full of praise of the NatWest Community Bond, launched last week, which aims to help organisations that otherwise would not be able to obtain bank loans.

Ratcliffe said that if a company had not worked out its millennium marketing strategy by Easter, it would not be able to put anything in place early enough to avoid being swamped in the rush to "mark the millennium".

He believes that the important issue that companies should address is this desire from consumers for companies to "do some good" and that there is no point looking back and celebrating what may already have been achieved: you have to try to work out what you want to achieve in this new era.

It is a difficult task trying to appear fresh and innovative while all of your competitors are attempting to do the same. But the price of failure is to look particularly leader-footed when the new era comes around.



Simon Ratcliffe, left, and Clive Cooper, who run Brand Futures

BUSINESS LETTER

Panel must recognise impartiality

From Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale

Sir, I would like to rectify one point in your Commentary of January 7. I am not questioning the essence of the Panel on Takeovers and Mergers. I do question its present operational practice in terms of enforcement of its own Spirit, Principles and Rules, and its Executive Structure, which ignores the "Rule against Bias". I do not suggest that a professional on secondment cannot be trusted to act independently: I do believe that he or she must be seen to be impartial. It is relevant that the Panel itself recog-

nizes the need for impartiality in Section 1(e) of the introduction to the Code. It could also recognize this at the executive level as there are three deputy directors general who would have to act if the director-general were indisposed. They could therefore surely act if there is a potential conflict of interest. Yours faithfully,

WOLFSON, The Great Universal Stores, Leonfield House, Curzon Street, London W1Y 7FL. *An incomplete version of this letter was published on January 22.*

No comment

AN UNDIGNIFIED row has broken out between Alan Clark, the cultured MP, and the *Culture Times* and one of its most charming writers, Clark, whose experiences with the opposite sex have often attracted attention, has written a most ungentle letter to the FT.

Lucy Kellaway had claimed that Clark had tried to charge £1,000 for an interview while hinting that he "might be able to improve the price somewhat". I have no idea what he

might have meant, because Clark, in a letter to the FT, confirms the sum but denies offering any such reduction. He continues most cruelly: "The idea of a sofa interview with Ms Kellaway held little appeal to me."

Clark is a guest in the FT's planned celebrity lunch, date as yet undecided, but with places to be auctioned to readers for charity. There is a strong hint in the letter — "while I am delighted to help the Save the Children Fund, I have no desire to promote the FT", followed by further abuse — that he may now not attend.

Neither party would return calls on the spot, but I trust more charitable thoughts will prevail.

TECHNICAL problems kept BT Alex Brown, which I persist in thinking of as NatWest but never mind, out of commission for 45 minutes after the markets opened yesterday morning. What went wrong? The server went down and it took something over half an hour to reboot, someone told me. I think he meant the computers didn't work.

Local difficulty

AS DAVID MONTGOMERY'S troubles at Mirror Group worsen — and I cannot find anyone who has worked



with him with anything but the deepest sympathy — I come across an invitation for a drinks do with the regional press on Thursday. Under the same roof will be Philip Graf of Trinity, which tried to buy Mirror, Chris Oakley of Regional Independent Media, the current bidder, and John Allwood, who runs Mirror Group's local papers and so could even take over from Monty.

So at least one should end up running the company. Also there is Charles Brims of Portsmouth & Sunderland, subject to a hostile takeover bid. What will they find to talk about?

frustrated by the complex ownership structure — Allied Domecq and Whitbread each own almost a quarter, Bass owns almost half and there is even a small stake for PepsiCo.

Now we hear of talks for Bass to buy Allied's holding. The latter wants to sell but has never been quite sure what its stake is worth.

Allied has a new finance director, Philip Bowman. It has been suggested to me that this makes it easier for Allied to work out the numbers and ensure a fair price. Bowman used to be finance director at Bass.

A FIELD day for geologists at the Oneworld alliance of BA and four other airlines. No one can agree on what to call their frequent-flier programmes.

BA's top customers are gold. American Airlines goes platinum, Cathay Pacific gives diamonds to its best friends... why does one get the impression that the marketing men have been involved? As a result Oneworld has had to bring in yet another range of categories, from emerald through sapphire to ruby for the real plebs.

At least they didn't follow the example of the Greek national airline, which recently named its frequent-fliers club *Icarus*.

Boat people

A REUNION yesterday for Martin Gilbert, chief executive of Aberdeen Asset Management, and Donald MacDonald, who was in charge of

the Oxford crew for the 1987 Boat Race — the most famous of recent years, the one when the American crew mutinied.

Aberdeen has just emerged as the new sponsor for the Boat Race. Gilbert used to meet MacDonald on the cricket and rugby pitch when each played for their respective Scottish schools.

They have, however, run across each other since. MacDonald now works for Aon after the insurer bought Alexander Clay in 1997. Aon is Aberdeen's insurer.

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk



Sticking an oar in: Martin Gilbert, left, with Donald MacDonald

big
on commitment...

...and long standing relationships.

Rowe & Maw

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THE TIMES UNIT

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Late rally lifts equities

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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CONSTRUCTION		
50	97	100
51	98	101
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167	214	217
168	215	218
169	216	219
170	217	220

[illegible]

Low Countries	A	B	%	High - Low Countries	A	B	%
30	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
35	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
40	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
45	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
50	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
55	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
60	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
65	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
70	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
75	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
80	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
85	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
90	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
95	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7
100	553	577	1.1	85	595	599	0.7

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE			
154	Med. Equipment	35	1.0
155	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
156	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
157	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
158	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
159	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
160	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
161	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
162	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
163	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
164	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
165	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
166	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
167	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
168	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
169	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
170	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
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185	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
186	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
187	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
188	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
189	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
190	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
191	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
192	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
193	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
194	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
195	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
196	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
197	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
198	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
199	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0
200	Med. Equip. Leasing	25	1.0

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT			
25 Accountant	50	50	75
26 Advertiser	50	50	75
27 Actor	50	50	75
28 Administrator	50	50	75
29 Allied Trade	50	50	75
30 Attorney	50	50	75
31 Bank (ind)	50	50	75
32 Barber	50	50	75
33 Book Dealer	50	50	75
34 Book Store	50	50	75
35 Book Store	50	50	75
36 Book Store	50	50	75
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99 Book Store	50	50	75
100 Book Store	50	50	75

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fits equities

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS				
150-1	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-2	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-3	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-4	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-5	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-6	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-7	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-8	Adams	265	27	44.9
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150-87	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-88	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-89	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-90	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-91	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-92	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-93	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-94	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-95	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-96	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-97	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-98	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-99	Adams	265	27	44.9
150-100	Adams	265	27	44.9

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

1986				1988			
Year	Company	Price \$	% +/-	Year	Company	Price \$	% +/-
37	Eastman Kodak	39	-	214	14 Eagle Bus	80	+2
100	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	739	418 BOP	489	+17
102	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	740	418 BOP	489	+17
103	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	741	418 BOP	489	+17
104	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	742	418 BOP	489	+17
105	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	743	418 BOP	489	+17
106	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	744	418 BOP	489	+17
107	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	745	418 BOP	489	+17
108	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	746	418 BOP	489	+17
109	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	747	418 BOP	489	+17
110	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	748	418 BOP	489	+17
111	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	749	418 BOP	489	+17
112	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	750	418 BOP	489	+17
113	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	751	418 BOP	489	+17
114	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	752	418 BOP	489	+17
115	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	753	418 BOP	489	+17
116	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	754	418 BOP	489	+17
117	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	755	418 BOP	489	+17
118	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	756	418 BOP	489	+17
119	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	757	418 BOP	489	+17
120	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	758	418 BOP	489	+17
121	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	759	418 BOP	489	+17
122	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	760	418 BOP	489	+17
123	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	761	418 BOP	489	+17
124	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	762	418 BOP	489	+17
125	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	763	418 BOP	489	+17
126	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	764	418 BOP	489	+17
127	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	765	418 BOP	489	+17
128	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	766	418 BOP	489	+17
129	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	767	418 BOP	489	+17
130	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	768	418 BOP	489	+17
131	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	769	418 BOP	489	+17
132	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	770	418 BOP	489	+17
133	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	771	418 BOP	489	+17
134	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	772	418 BOP	489	+17
135	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	773	418 BOP	489	+17
136	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	774	418 BOP	489	+17
137	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	775	418 BOP	489	+17
138	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	776	418 BOP	489	+17
139	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	777	418 BOP	489	+17
140	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	778	418 BOP	489	+17
141	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	779	418 BOP	489	+17
142	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	780	418 BOP	489	+17
143	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	781	418 BOP	489	+17
144	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	782	418 BOP	489	+17
145	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	783	418 BOP	489	+17
146	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	784	418 BOP	489	+17
147	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	785	418 BOP	489	+17
148	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	786	418 BOP	489	+17
149	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	787	418 BOP	489	+17
150	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	788	418 BOP	489	+17
151	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	789	418 BOP	489	+17
152	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	790	418 BOP	489	+17
153	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	791	418 BOP	489	+17
154	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	792	418 BOP	489	+17
155	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	793	418 BOP	489	+17
156	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	794	418 BOP	489	+17
157	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	795	418 BOP	489	+17
158	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	796	418 BOP	489	+17
159	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	797	418 BOP	489	+17
160	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	798	418 BOP	489	+17
161	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	799	418 BOP	489	+17
162	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	800	418 BOP	489	+17
163	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	801	418 BOP	489	+17
164	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	802	418 BOP	489	+17
165	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	803	418 BOP	489	+17
166	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	804	418 BOP	489	+17
167	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	805	418 BOP	489	+17
168	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	806	418 BOP	489	+17
169	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	807	418 BOP	489	+17
170	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	808	418 BOP	489	+17
171	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	809	418 BOP	489	+17
172	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	810	418 BOP	489	+17
173	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	811	418 BOP	489	+17
174	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	812	418 BOP	489	+17
175	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	813	418 BOP	489	+17
176	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	814	418 BOP	489	+17
177	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	815	418 BOP	489	+17
178	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	816	418 BOP	489	+17
179	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	817	418 BOP	489	+17
180	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	818	418 BOP	489	+17
181	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	819	418 BOP	489	+17
182	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	820	418 BOP	489	+17
183	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	821	418 BOP	489	+17
184	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	822	418 BOP	489	+17
185	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	823	418 BOP	489	+17
186	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	824	418 BOP	489	+17
187	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	825	418 BOP	489	+17
188	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	826	418 BOP	489	+17
189	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	827	418 BOP	489	+17
190	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	828	418 BOP	489	+17
191	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	829	418 BOP	489	+17
192	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	830	418 BOP	489	+17
193	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	831	418 BOP	489	+17
194	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	832	418 BOP	489	+17
195	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	833	418 BOP	489	+17
196	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	834	418 BOP	489	+17
197	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	835	418 BOP	489	+17
198	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	836	418 BOP	489	+17
199	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	837	418 BOP	489	+17
200	Eastman Kodak	250	-1	838	418 BOP	489	+17

[illegible][illegible]

97	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	125	George	387	3.7	22.4
98	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	126	John Jackson	405	4.0	22.4
99	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	127	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
100	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	128	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
101	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	129	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
102	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	130	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
103	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	131	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
104	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	132	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
105	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	133	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
106	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	134	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
107	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	135	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
108	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	136	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
109	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	137	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
110	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	138	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
111	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	139	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
112	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	140	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
113	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	141	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
114	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	142	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
115	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	143	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
116	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	144	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
117	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	145	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
118	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	146	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
119	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	147	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
120	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	148	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
121	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	149	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
122	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	150	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
123	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	151	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
124	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	152	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
125	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	153	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
126	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	154	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
127	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	155	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
128	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	156	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
129	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	157	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
130	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	158	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
131	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	159	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
132	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	160	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
133	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	161	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
134	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	162	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
135	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	163	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
136	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	164	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
137	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	165	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
138	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	166	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
139	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	167	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
140	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	168	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
141	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	169	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
142	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	170	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
143	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	171	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4

TRANSPORT									
144	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	172	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
145	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	173	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
146	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	174	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
147	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	175	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
148	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	176	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
149	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	177	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
150	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	178	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
151	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	179	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
152	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	180	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
153	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	181	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
154	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	182	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
155	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	183	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
156	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	184	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
157	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	185	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
158	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	186	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
159	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	187	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
160	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	188	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
161	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	189	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
162	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	190	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
163	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	191	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
164	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	192	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
165	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	193	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
166	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	194	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
167	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	195	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
168	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	196	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
169	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	197	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
170	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	198	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
171	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	199	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
172	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	200	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
173	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	201	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
174	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	202	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
175	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	203	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
176	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	204	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
177	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	205	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
178	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	206	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
179	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	207	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
180	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	208	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
181	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	209	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
182	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	210	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
183	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	211	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
184	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	212	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
185	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	213	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
186	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	214	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
187	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	215	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
188	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	216	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
189	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	217	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
190	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	218	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
191	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	219	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
192	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	220	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
193	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	221	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
194	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	222	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
195	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	223	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
196	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	224	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
197	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	225	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
198	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	226	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
199	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	227	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
200	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	228	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
201	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	229	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
202	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	230	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
203	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	231	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
204	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	232	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
205	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	233	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
206	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	234	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
207	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	235	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
208	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	236	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
209	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	237	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
210	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	238	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
211	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	239	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
212	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	240	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
213	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	241	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
214	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	242	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
215	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	243	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
216	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	244	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
217	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	245	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
218	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	246	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
219	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	247	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
220	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	248	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
221	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	249	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
222	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	250	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
223	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	251	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
224	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	252	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
225	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	253	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
226	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	254	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
227	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	255	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
228	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	256	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
229	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	257	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
230	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	258	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
231	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	259	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
232	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	260	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
233	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	261	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
234	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	262	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
235	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	263	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
236	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	264	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
237	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	265	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
238	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	266	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
239	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	267	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
240	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	268	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4
241	Chrysler Agency	485	4.8	22.8	269	Chrysler	405	4.0	22.4

[illegible]

1979		1978		1977		1976		1975		1974		1973		1972		1971		1970	
270	100%	300%	100%	400%	100%	500%	100%	600%	100%	700%	100%	800%	100%	900%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
280	100%	310%	100%	410%	100%	510%	100%	610%	100%	710%	100%	810%	100%	910%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
290	100%	320%	100%	420%	100%	520%	100%	620%	100%	720%	100%	820%	100%	920%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
300	100%	330%	100%	430%	100%	530%	100%	630%	100%	730%	100%	830%	100%	930%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
310	100%	340%	100%	440%	100%	540%	100%	640%	100%	740%	100%	840%	100%	940%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
320	100%	350%	100%	450%	100%	550%	100%	650%	100%	750%	100%	850%	100%	950%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
330	100%	360%	100%	460%	100%	560%	100%	660%	100%	760%	100%	860%	100%	960%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
340	100%	370%	100%	470%	100%	570%	100%	670%	100%	770%	100%	870%	100%	970%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
350	100%	380%	100%	480%	100%	580%	100%	680%	100%	780%	100%	880%	100%	980%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
360	100%	390%	100%	490%	100%	590%	100%	690%	100%	790%	100%	890%	100%	990%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
370	100%	400%	100%	500%	100%	600%	100%	700%	100%	800%	100%	900%	100%	1000%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
380	100%	410%	100%	510%	100%	610%	100%	710%	100%	810%	100%	910%	100%	1010%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
390	100%	420%	100%	520%	100%	620%	100%	720%	100%	820%	100%	920%	100%	1020%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
400	100%	430%	100%	530%	100%	630%	100%	730%	100%	830%	100%	930%	100%	1030%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
410	100%	440%	100%	540%	100%	640%	100%	740%	100%	840%	100%	940%	100%	1040%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
420	100%	450%	100%	550%	100%	650%	100%	750%	100%	850%	100%	950%	100%	1050%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
430	100%	460%	100%	560%	100%	660%	100%	760%	100%	860%	100%	960%	100%	1060%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
440	100%	470%	100%	570%	100%	670%	100%	770%	100%	870%	100%	970%	100%	1070%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
450	100%	480%	100%	580%	100%	680%	100%	780%	100%	880%	100%	980%	100%	1080%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
460	100%	490%	100%	590%	100%	690%	100%	790%	100%	890%	100%	990%	100%	1090%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
470	100%	500%	100%	600%	100%	700%	100%	800%	100%	900%	100%	1000%	100%	1100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

1979		1978		1977		1976		1975		1974		1973		1972		1971		1970	
270	100%	300%	100%	400%	100%	500%	100%	600%	100%	700%	100%	800%	100%	900%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
280	100%	310%	100%	410%	100%	510%	100%	610%	100%	710%	100%	810%	100%	910%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
290	100%	320%	100%	420%	100%	520%	100%	620%	100%	720%	100%	820%	100%	920%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
300	100%	330%	100%	430%	100%	530%	100%	630%	100%	730%	100%	830%	100%	930%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
310	100%	340%	100%	440%	100%	540%	100%	640%	100%	740%	100%	840%	100%	940%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
320	100%	350%	100%	450%	100%	550%	100%	650%	100%	750%	100%	850%	100%	950%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
330	100%	360%	100%	460%	100%	560%	100%	660%	100%	760%	100%	860%	100%	960%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
340	100%	370%	100%	470%	100%	570%	100%	670%	100%	770%	100%	870%	100%	970%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
350	100%	380%	100%	480%	100%	580%	100%	680%	100%	780%	100%	880%	100%	980%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
360	100%	390%	100%	490%	100%	590%	100%	690%	100%	790%	100%	890%	100%	990%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
370	100%	400%	100%	500%	100%	600%	100%	700%	100%	800%	100%	900%	100%	1000%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
380	100%	410%	100%	510%	100%	610%	100%	710%	100%	810%	100%	910%	100%	1010%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
390	100%	420%	100%	520%	100%	620%	100%	720%	100%	820%	100%	920%	100%	1020%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
400	100%	430%	100%	530%	100%	630%	100%	730%	100%	830%	100%	930%	100%	1030%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
410	100%	440%	100%	540%	100%	640%	100%	740%	100%	840%	100%	940%	100%	1040%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
420	100%	450%	100%	550%	100%	650%	100%	750%	100%	850%	100%	950%	100%	1050%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
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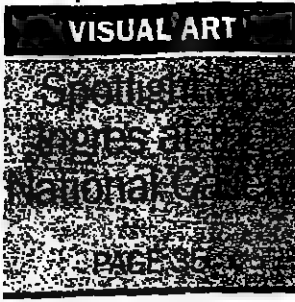
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VISUAL ART



THE TIMES ARTS

THEATRE



Actor Jeremy Northam has made it in Hollywood. So what's he doing at the Almeida — slumming? Matt Wolf reports

Jeremy Northam is on the verge of becoming such a ubiquitous cinema presence that one is slightly surprised to find Sandra Bullock's erstwhile co-star in *The Net* sipping coffee in the Almeida Theatre bar preparing for notes from his current play's writer-director, Peter Gill.

The same weekend might instead have found Northam in New York promoting the premiere of *Gloria*, the Sidney Lumet film in which he appears opposite Sharon Stone, or even in Utah at the Sundance Festival, where Northam and the American actor Steve Zahn are generating a terrific buzz as escapades from a chain gang in the independent film *Happy Texas*. In addition, Northam will be seen this year in two screen adaptations of period plays: Rattigan's *The Winslow Boy*, written and directed by David Mamet, and alongside Cate Blanchett and Minnie Driver in the director Oliver Parker's youthful rethinking of Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, both of which cast Northam as establishment figures who may be less stiff-backed than they appear. Also awaiting release is a Sundance entry from last year, *The Misadventures of Margaret*, with Northam as a professor married to Parker Posey's neurotic novelist.

"This is what I've been waiting for," Northam says of the celluloid onslaught, purple sunglasses his only vague nod to the burgeoning film renown that may at last position the 37-year-old actor as a Hugh Grant or Ralph Fiennes-level star. And yet, far from hoping the Atlantic, the actor has chosen to return to the theatre for his first stage appearance since *The Country Wife* for the Royal Shakespeare Company four and a half years ago.

What's more, he arrives not as a visiting film star in the Almeida tradition of Kevin Spacey, Juliette Binoche and Liam Neeson, but as one of the eight-person ensemble of Gill's new play, *Certain Young Men*, in which Northam plays David, a gay obsessional, uneasily partnered with Andrew Woodall's married Christopher.

"I grew up within that aesthetic," Northam says of the company feel of the play,



"I got into acting because I like plays," says Jeremy Northam, who is now doing just that in London. But with five new films featuring Northam heading our way, the British actor will soon be on a screen near you

Enter, pursued by fame

which exists in notable contrast to a film career mainly spent playing male second banana to a motley parade of high-powered women, including Bullock, Stone, Mira Sorvino (the critically reviled *Mimic*) and Gwyneth Paltrow (the critically praised *Emma*).

"I got into acting because I like plays. It's nice, too, not to have the pressure of 'How's the weekend box office?' The joy of just doing something like this simply and directly and, you hope, skilfully — without those other pressures

— is really quite refreshing." Besides, he adds, "the people who do plays who are perceived as movie stars all come from a very strong theatrical background."

That's certainly true of Northam, who left two years into drama training at Bristol to take a job in Nottingham. Further regional theatre work followed before a career-making stint at the National Theatre, where he won a 1990 Olivier Award for his performance in Richard Eyre's staging of *The Voyage Inheritance* and

played no fewer than three parts at varying times in the same director's *Hamlet*. Indeed, he stepped into the title role one fateful night in September, 1989, when Daniel Day-Lewis had a breakdown and left the stage.

Northam looks back on the traumatic evening as "ancient history", which it probably is compared to wooing — and stalking — Bullock in *The Net*. "I could never have imagined that I would be performing opposite these icons, these movie stars, who are all totally differ-

ent; it all came as a total surprise, really."

Their presence has meant he has yet to bear the burden for the films' variable commercial fates. "I wouldn't be responsible in the public eye, because I'm not Sharon or Mira or Gwyneth. But of course you put a lot of time and effort into doing what you do, and you would much rather be associated with things which are happy successes."

If advance word is any gauge, both *The Winslow Boy*

and *An Ideal Husband* are set to be exactly that, which looks to be especially pleasing in view of the latter film insofar as Northam came late to the cast as a last-minute replacement for Gabriel Byrne. "I got back on a plane from Los Angeles, and a day later I was in a readthrough," the actor says of his role as Sir Robert Chiltern, the ideal husband of Wilde's title. "I went from playing an escaped convict in *Happy Texas* to a politician with a dodgy past."

Still, it is hardly required etiquette that has Northam enthusing about his current play. "What has been so brilliant is the way Peter Gill does things and demands things of his actors," even as he dismisses any sense of noblesse oblige about a performer appearing for a fraction of his usual fee. "People talk about you earning £250 a week like Nicole Kidman as if it's a badge of honour, and that makes me feel up because for most people in the business, that is a good wage and that's all you get."

"I'm not doing this to wear clothes of penitence and go 'Oh, I have to be a masochist for a while'. I'm doing it because it's not often that you're involved in the creation of something, as I was with this seven years ago [in workshop]."

In any case, Northam has hardly gone Hollywood: he continues to live, for example, in North London. "I remember feeling at various times annoyed at the assumption that one was deeply ambitious. What you hope for is to play the parts you want to play, to be a part of the industry that you wanted to be a part of. I'm ambitious to be a better actor."

● *Certain Young Men* opens tomorrow night at the Almeida, London N1 (0171-359 9404). *An Ideal Husband* is released in Britain on April 16.

BUILDING A LIBRARY

A guide to the best available classical recordings, presented in conjunction with BBC Radio 3

VERDI'S REQUIEM

Reviewed by Humphrey Burton

FOR every great performer (and for every recording engineer, one might add, since the work's dynamic range is exceptional) the Verdi Requiem is an Everest waiting to be climbed. Even more universal in its appeal than the Missa Solemnis or the Requiem of Brahms and Berlioz, Verdi's 90-minute masterpiece is the grandest religious composition of the 19th century.

Completed in 1874, it was the agnostic Verdi's outpouring of deep-felt grief following the death of Italy's most beloved poet, Mazzini.

Each of the four soloists has several long solos which are every bit as intense and demanding as an operatic aria, although Verdi insisted that "one mustn't sing this Mass in the way one sings an opera — therefore phrasing and dynamics that may be fine in the theatre won't please me at all". A quartet of superb artists is nevertheless essential, but they must leave operatic sob and can-bello high notes behind them, particularly when

they combine in a taxing but expressive variety of duets, trios and quartets.

The Requiem also demands a chorus of great strength and flexibility, an orchestra of red-blooded virtuosi and a conductor of spirituality and dynamism.

Toscanini conducted the Requiem at Verdi's funeral in 1901 and made a recording 50 years later that, despite its boxy sound, still represents the authentic tradition. Conducting giants of every generation since the war have recorded it: Frickey made a brilliant version in Berlin in 1953 (mono but single, mid-priced CD from Deutsche Grammophon); Giulini's 1964 interpretation for EMI (full price and full-blooded) remains one of the best, if you can take Schwarzkopf's breathy delivery, and Barbirolli, recording five years later, has the superb Jon Vickers among his soloists, and the tremendous Philharmonia Chorus.

To order the recommended recording, with free delivery, please send a cheque payable to The Times Music Shop to FREEPOST, SCO681, Forres, IV36 0BR or phone 0345 023 498; e-mail: music@the-times.co.uk

Next Saturday on Radio 3 (11am): Bernstein's West Side Story

Solti's 1967 version, made in Vienna, is wonderfully engineered by Decca but a slightly languid Joan Sutherland lowers the tension. Four modern, digital recordings all have strong selling points. Mud is at La Scala, Abbado at the Vienna State Opera. Two English conductors also work with powerful international casts: Colin Davis — in Munich — for RCA and John Eliot Gardiner, employing period instruments, for Philips. If you won't be happy with anything less than original digital then go for the Davis (remember his compelling Proms performance in 1997). But my final choice is vintage Leonard Bernstein on Sony Classical (SMDK 47639, two CDs, £17.99); the soloists include Domingo plus the LSO and LSO Chorus, remastered from a vivid 1970 performance taped at the Albert Hall. Bernstein has the soul, the heart and the dramatic energy: he inspires an electrifying experience.

Poet celebrated on wings of song

DESPITE its punning title, this half-hour cantata is full of unfettered lyricism, but it is not all Mendelssohnian sweetness and light: the witches' sabbath at its centre has the orchestra shrieking and growling, and the pagans have nothing of the religious respectability that often creeps into Mendelssohn's choral music.

Berlioz's account caught all of this freshness and vigour, making it clear why Berlioz, for one, thought the score "the start of a substantial overture, this half-hour cantata is full of unfettered lyricism, but it is not all Mendelssohnian sweetness and light: the witches' sabbath at its centre has the orchestra shrieking and growling, and the pagans have nothing of the religious respectability that often creeps into Mendelssohn's choral music."

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CONCERTS

finest thing Mendelssohn has done". The chorus was lively and the soloists strong. Timothy Robinson displayed a ringing tenor as the Druid, Michael George was solemn as the Priest and Jean Rigby

had a fine presence as the Old Woman.

To most music lovers, *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* also implies Mendelssohn, but here we were treated to Beethoven's seldom heard choral setting of the Goethe poem. Notable for its vivid pictorialism and occasional anticipations of the Ninth Symphony, the score inspired alert, upfront singing from the choir. They had warmth, too, in Schumann's *Requiem für Migi-*

non, where the most ravishing music is reserved for a quartet of women, sung with distinction by members of the choir. Two well-known works completed the programme. The orchestra revelled in Beethoven's *Egmont* overture, moving from a soft-grained opening to a blazing close, and Brahms's Alto Rhapsody found Jean Rigby on glowing form.

JOHN ALLISON

Time to take stock

THE diagnosis of Mahler's serious heart condition in 1907 immediately preceded the Ninth Symphony of 1908-09. While it is true that there is a certain amount of mythology surrounding the composer's last works, it is also undeniable that thoughts of death loom large in the Ninth.

And it is perhaps not unduly fanciful to detect in Bernard Haitink's account of the symphony with the London Philharmonic on Saturday an increased sense of urgency. Whether his recent heart surgery has anything to do with this is a delicate question, but the parallel at least deserves mention.

What was striking about the interpretation was its raw energy, a lacerating quality that exposed bone and sinew. Where one normally associates Haitink with control, moderation and a certain dourness, there was no mistaking the fierceness with which he ripped into the angry out-

bursts of the first movement. To some extent the unflattering acoustics of the Festival Hall exaggerated the harsh orchestral sound, and caused unblended timbres at the beginning to seem even more startling than probably intended.

Yet it was fair preparation for the starkness of what was to follow: a reading in which the shadows that fall across the tranquil resignation of the main material seemed darker than ever. Given that the middle movements are both laden with more or less grotesque irony, it was a reasonable strategy of Haitink's to differentiate clearly between them.

The Ländler second movement, marked "somewhat clumsy and very coarse", with peasant dancing that should sound "ponderous" or "heavy-footed", according to the score, was indeed delivered with a very deliberate rhythmic tread. Done this way, the trills on woodwind, and especially horns, had an unsettlingly leering quality.

The Rondo Burleske third movement, on the other hand, was a whirlwind of hyperactivity, seething with energy and dispatched with virtuosity. All this leads, of course, to the sublimely valedictory hymn of the great Adagio finale. For all that the earlier movements signalled a new approach, Haitink is not a man to revel in sentimentality. True to his nature, it was not a finale of overt emotionalism, but a noble farewell, not without passion, yet sober and restrained.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Poulenc in his moods

Yan-Pascal Tortelier and his colleagues in the BBC Philharmonic must have had misgivings about devoting a whole programme to Poulenc. Apart from the question as to whether the music could sustain that kind of scrutiny, there was more than a possibility that the public would not find it very attractive. Poulenc, certainly not. In fact, enterprise was rewarded by a well-filled Bridgewater Hall and an audience that was clearly very happy with what it heard.

The risk was all the greater for the expense of a concert involving Martin Roscoe and Peter Donohoe in the Concerto for Two Pianos. Lynne Dawson as soloist in the *Stabat Mater* and not only the Leeds Festival Chorus but also the BBC Singers, who had a tricky task to perform in the unaccompanied six-part cantata *Un soir de neige*. But the ideal Poulenc programme, covering his development from the boyish *Les Biches* to the most in-

spired of the religious works of his maturity, requires that kind of investment.

It certainly could not omit the Concerto for Two Pianos, which is the ultimate example of the risks Poulenc could take — in ignoring all the rules of construction and discarding all discretion about using other composers' material — without sacrificing either coherence or individuality. It was brilliantly characterised here by a pair of soloists perfectly aligned with each other and with an orchestra sensitive to the poetry in the score as well as its fairground vulgarity.

The transition between "the hooligan", as one of Poulenc's friends called him, to "the monk", as the same friend called him, was made by the a cappella setting of wartime Eluard verse in *Un soir de neige* — a bleak demonstration of how serious-minded the composer could be.

Tortelier was also in a serious frame of mind. If his treatment of the suite from *Les Biches* was not quite the uninhibited celebration one might have hoped for, his interpretation of the *Stabat Mater* was entirely appropriate to the stature of that work and the chastity of its style. Of course, we are talking Poulenc, which means that chastity is a relative rather than absolute value: the long-delayed entry of the solo soprano voice is sheer voluptuousness and, happily, neither the radiant Dawson nor the conductor was so severe as to attempt to conceal the fact.

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The man who loved women

VISUAL ART: Ingres could paint men but they were never his real inspiration, as Richard Cork discovers at the National Gallery

No sooner has late Monet settled into the Royal Academy than another, equally rewarding French painter arrives at the National Gallery. But these two magnificent shows could hardly offer a greater contrast. No people can be discerned in Monet's infamously hazy garden, whereas Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres was a supreme painter of portraits. With lofty disdain, he pretended that history painting was his true calling. But Ingres is always at his finest when faced with a sitter, so the National Gallery is right to concentrate on portraiture and leave his pompous, often absurd allegories alone.

Just how overblown they can be is suggested by the first exhibit to confront us: a towering and marmoreal effigy of Napoleon I on his Imperial Throne. Executed by the young Ingres as a precocious showpiece in 1806, it presents the newly laurelled Emperor as a blanchet, implacable despot. Kesting his gold-encrusted foot on a velvet cushion, himself lying on a carpet emblazoned with the imperial eagle, Napoleon displays his fearsome authority. Clasp the sceptre of Charles V like a vicious spear, he allows Charlemagne's hand of justice to rest against his left thigh. Posing frontally, with a rigid hauteur that reflects Napoleon's appetite for unchallenged power, this severe apparition seems as remote from the modern world as a medieval icon.

Mercifully, though, the glacial Emperor remains an exception among Ingres' portraits. He was equally capable, only a year earlier, of making Madame Rivière into one of his most sensual images. With youthful audacity, Ingres turns his sitter into a sequence of swooping, whirling undulations. Treating the oval canvas as a flat surface, he allows limbs and draperies to flow across it with virtuoso élan. The ringleted Mme Rivière somehow maintains an imperious pose, while all around her extravagant lineations leap, coil and tumble. The veil surging from her head, no less than the embroidered shawl twisting in fantastic convolutions around her

elongated arm, have an almost orgasmic abandon. For all its bravura, the Rivière portrait was received with disapproval in Paris. Jacques-Louis David, Ingres' coolly Neo-Classical master, would never have allowed himself to indulge in such an unbridled display. For the moment, Ingres had to remain content with building a localised reputation in Rome. Here he was able to study his idolised Raphael at will, dreaming already of the grandiose apotheosis he would execute later in life. But he also had the good sense to embark on a portrait as superlative as the half-length of François-Marie Granet, a landscape painter and close friend.

If anyone had doubted Ingres' ability to respond to men with the fervour he bestowed on women, the Granet portrait settled the question. Dressed

'Even his slightest portrait has a sense of tension'

in a rich brown cloak, which gives the design its pyramidal firmness, the young man clasps his sketchbook against a backdrop of the Quirinale. The buildings are painted with an eye for flattened, cubic simplification that anticipates views of hilltop Provençal villages by Cézanne, who knew the Granet portrait well in his local museum at Aix. But Ingres counters this structural austerity by giving his handsome sitter nervous, sidelong-glancing eyes and wind-tousled hair. Tense with unattained, youthful ambition, Granet is pitched against a thunderous sky that reinforces his troubled mood. For all its debt to Classicism, this complex image shows how Romantic unrest was waiting to burst out of the ordered framework.

Ingres never permitted his need for control to be overpowered by an onrush of unchecked feeling. But the turbulence beneath the surface rigour cannot be doubted, lending even his slightest portrait a powerful sense of tension. The pencil drawings he made in such profusion, largely to support himself after the collapse of his Napoleonic supporters in Rome, possess a palpable intensity. Adept at summarising his mainly British clients with con-

summate skill, he rose above mere flattery and proved that an effortless command of line lies at the very centre of his art. Whether drawing an elegant, intertwined family group, a discerning old lady or a small boy solemnly marooned on an ornate armchair, Ingres deploys his draughtsmanship with miraculous suppleness. When he so wished, Ingres could embark on a painting with unerring speed and loose-

ness. But once he had completed his early stages, with a dash worthy of Manet, all that swiftness gave way to infinite, painstaking elaboration. Because the pigment in his portrait of the Baron de Norvins has become worn, we can detect some of the changes Ingres introduced as the picture proceeded. The outcome, however, is the very opposite of laboured. Contrasted with a shimmering wall-cover and

curtain of near-Venetian sensuousness, the Director of the Police cuts a sober, monochromatic figure. Although his white shirt threatens to spurt out from his lapel, its unexpected frothiness is contained within the severity of a jet-black coat. This is a man professionally accustomed to suspicion, and his stiff body refuses to lean back against the damask-draped chair where he sits with such vigilance.

As Ingres grew older, and found himself plying with commissions from wealthy society ladies in Paris, he allowed the reins more licence. Steadfastly monogamous in his own marriage, he nevertheless gave himself up to erotic indulgence in the realm of painting. When confronted by the heady languor of Madame de Senonnes in 1814, he revealed the extent of his willingness to be seduced. Viewed slightly from

above, so that her breasts are shown to ample advantage, the hothouse creature relaxes on sumptuous, gleaming fabrics. The sitter looks up, her unmarked oval face calm above the spume of a triple-layered lace collar. Pale satin eruptions break out, at provocative intervals, along the surface of her wine-red velvet dress. No fewer than 13 rings can be counted on her fleshy fingers, and Ingres is bold enough to

sign his name on a calling card stuffed into the edge of the mirror behind her.

This expanse of glass, the first to appear in an Ingres portrait, reflects the back of Mme de Senonnes' head. Shadowy and tantalising, it introduces an element of mystery after the brazen allure displayed by the woman in front of the mirror. Ingres deepens the enigma by making the rest of the glass surprisingly dark, and allowing it to spread over a large area of the painting's unfathomable upper section.

The great female portraits that crown Ingres' later career give glass a still more mesmerising role. The Vicomtesse d'Haussonville, far more alert and appraising than the indolent Mme de Senonnes, leans back against a mantelpiece surmounted by a grand mirror. With one distended figure propping up her chin, echoing a pose adopted by the Greek muse Polyhymnia, she gazes through crescent-shaped eyes in an abstracted manner. Her luxurious accoutrements do not seem to satisfy the young woman, who would later publish several historical romances. She seems a little restless, as if dissatisfied with her leisurely existence. And the prominent reflection of her head and shoulders stresses the young woman's solitude, enveloping her with the unknown-

'The hothouse creature relaxes on sumptuous fabric'

ble emptiness of the dark glass.

The mirror image is deployed most somberly of all in the grand final version of Madame Moitessier's two portraits. An earlier, redoubtable three-quarter length of this fashionable hostess shows her standing, arrayed in black and toying with a rope of pearls against a flat, damask-covered wall. She is expressionless, and her detachment is accentuated by the garland of lush roses dangling from her sculpted hair. They give her the aura of a remote goddess, accustomed to receiving adoration without betraying a scintilla of excitement.

The same curious blend of antiquity and modernity can be found in the later Moitessier portrait. The opposition between them, however, is now heightened. Seated, she allows a flower-spattered Second Empire dress to billow across the lower half of the painting. She appears to float on this sea of petals, and Matisse would have savoured Ingres' willingness to give these opulent patterns such a strong pictorial presence. Once again, Moitessier is removed from her nouveau riche context and given an antique gravity. The wide mirror behind confirms this dimension, by presenting her in shadowy profile as a Sphinx-like enigma. This time, though, the reflected image seems to be turning into stone. Her stillness is close to death, mocking the woman's finery and bewitched satisfaction even as Ingres bestows immortality upon her.

Portraits by Ingres at the National Gallery (0171-899 3321) until April 25



Dark glasses in his great portrait of Vicomtesse d'Haussonville, Ingres once again allows a mirror to play a mesmerising role, emphasising her solitude

AROUND THE LONDON GALLERIES

DECADENCE is a queasy concept; easier to sense than it is to define. It glistens, alluring yet repulsive, like the gloss of bright colours on decaying

meat. Decadence is the Roman Emperor Commodus; ravaging then slaying virgins. It is Evelyn Waugh's tortoise with a diamond-encrusted

shell. It is cruelty and high camp, opulence and consumption. "It is the rottenness from which all life springs," said Germaine Greer.

But most of all decadence is defined by its era, which is why the Crafts Council has chosen this cusp of the century to mount a show which explores decadence over the past decade. The sumptuous display of jewellery and textiles, sculpture and ceramics, glass and furniture, tantalises. The rich mix of media and ideas fascinates. It is hard for the eye to settle at first.

In the corner of a chamber, draped in dark velvet, a polished black leopards' heads to his doom. His wings, quilled with mirrors, catch myriad glancing reflections of light. This is Andrew Logan's interpretation of the theme: a glitzy glory before the moment of death. Other works are more sinister. Seen from a distance, Andy Frazell's wall clock may look like a nursery ornament. But examine it more closely and you see a slaughterhouse scene.

Each exhibit deserves such fastidious inspection. A cornucopia, woven from ivy and leaves and moss, beaded with berries and old-man's beard, is not a symbol of bountiful nature. Discarded Fanta cans and crumpled crisp packets overspill the lip. And inside the ceramic rim, rippled like fungus, a scaly tentacle lurks.



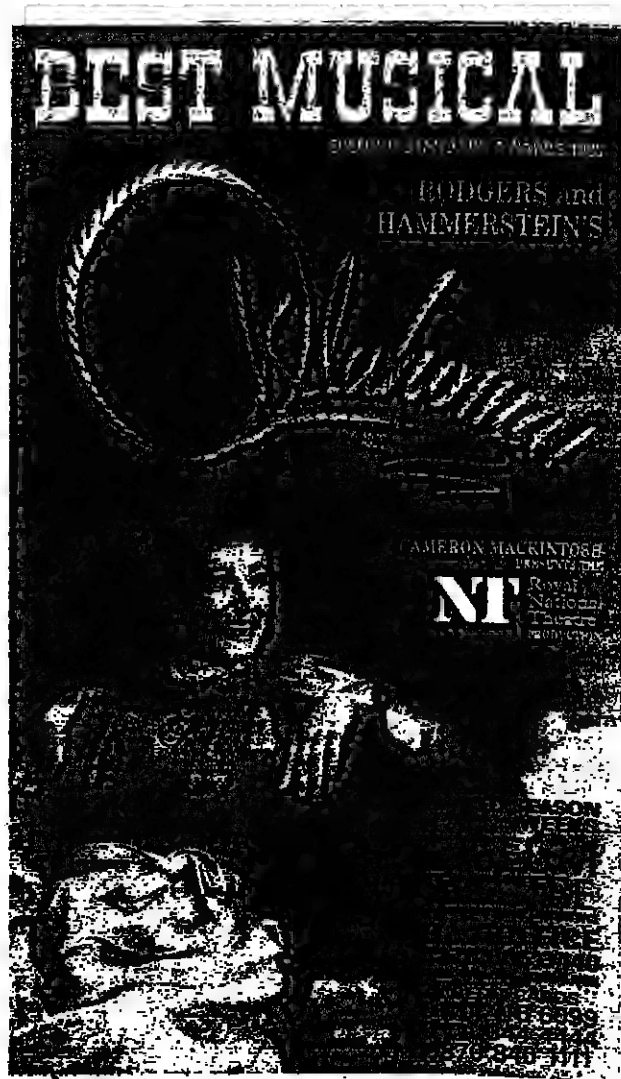
Decadent? Andrew Logan's *Icarus* at the Crafts Council

Texture and pattern, design and detail, are the essence of this show, whether seen in the minimalist elegance of a John Makepeace cabinet, or the gilded decorations of a harpsichord. This show unfurls and explores the desires of a decade, and questions whether they really are decadent any more. Crafts Council, 44a Pentonville Road, London N1 (0171-278 7700) until March 14

I BUMPED into the artist Peter Blake at the Royal Academy's Monet show. Among all the admirers of this most popular Impressionist, Blake's was an isolated voice of dissent. He didn't like the paintings, he declared, which seemed all the odder at the time because near by was a photograph of the ageing Monet, and the similarities in appearance between the two artists were striking. But the clue to their differences lay in their beards. Where Monet's was flowing, Blake's was tightly clipped. And his artistic style has the same taut precision.

Those disheartened by the stretching queues for the Royal Academy might enjoy popping round the corner to see Blake's prints. Here are jolky series of tattooed ladies, brunettes and blondes in bright bikinis. "I wonder where this thing leads to?" cries Robin to Batman, as they slide down the lumpy curve of a thigh. Elvis Presley nestles against a clavicle. Mysteriously detailed woodcuts examine the freaks in the circus sideshow, photomontages create bewildering theatres in a Regency room. But more usually Blake seems to be caught in the rainbow-hued realm of the Sixties and Seventies. Perhaps his work will come back into fashion again in this retro-obsessed world. Peter Gwyther, 29 Bruton St, London W1 (0171-495 4747) until Feb 27

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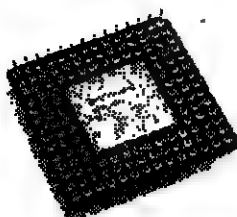
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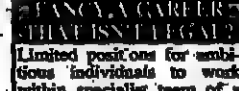


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For richer, for poorer, till law us do part

Marrying in a foreign country can be a tricky affair. Edward Fennell reports

By all means go to the Land where the Bong Tree Grows for your wedding. Just try to make sure that the marriage is not conducted by the Turkey Who Lives on the Hill.

According to Mick Jagger's team, his marriage to Jerry Hall was a turkey from day one because they did not have the right number of witnesses and there was a mix-up in the paperwork. So has Mick known all along that he was urged? Or has this defence been unearthed more recently by a bright lawyer who has been investigating the events of the ceremony in Bali?

The basic position in the UK is that an overseas marriage will be valid if both persons had the capacity to marry and the local civil formalities were fully observed. Look beneath that generalisation, however, and the complexity of the issue soon becomes baffling. Even leading authorities such as Peter George of Charles Russell say this area of international private law can be "like playing multidimensional chess".

David Trux, of the Anglo-Australian practice David Trux and Company, describes the law as extremely complicated. "I'm writing a manual so that high street lawyers can understand the issues," he says. "Frankly, it is very difficult to do."

The upsurge in the number of complex marital disputes reflects increasingly international lives in which place of marriage, husbands and wives, domicile and assets may be scattered across the globe.

Mr Trux explained: "The recently had a case in which an Australian woman married an Irish man and the couple lived initially in Ireland. The marriage broke up and the man went to live in France, the woman in Australia."

"He then petitioned for divorce in England and we had to persuade the English courts that this was not appropriate. So he then got a quickie divorce in Mexico and promptly married someone else, in New York. The authorities there recognised the Mexican divorce, but other countries would not."

Where does that leave the wife? Is she still married? If she decided that she was divorced and then remarried, could Robin Cook sue for breach of marital secrets? Peter Carter-Ruck, the libel lawyer, thinks so. "There is a precedent for this," he says — a case in 1967 when the Duchess of Argyll obtained an injunction to stop the Duke, her former husband, and a newspaper, from disclosing marital confidences. The court held that marriage was a relationship of a confidential nature that gave rise to an obligation of confidence. Mr Carter-Ruck adds: "Mr Cook could arguably seek to obtain an injunction to prevent further publication of details of his marriage."

□ The judges are paying their own tribute to Lord Denning for his 100th birthday (see page 43). Lord Woolf, the Master

would her second marriage be valid? Frankly, the answers may vary from country to country. For example, had she been domiciled in Ireland but had obtained a divorce in Australia, it would not be recognised in Ireland. But it would be recognised in England.

The result, says Katharine Shaw of the family law department at Radcliffe, is that when it comes to divorce, there is an increasing amount of "forum shopping" as lawyers and clients weigh up the pros and cons of where they will launch an action. Some jurisdictions might offer a quicker process, but their rulings might be unenforceable. And if their decisions are not recognised by other significant countries, that may queer the possibility of a future valid marriage.

So while the status of marriages used rarely to be questioned (except in cases of bigamy or non-consummation), there is likely to be a growing number of divorce and inheritance cases that hinge on the issue "Was the marriage valid in the first place?"

And it is not just globetrotting superstars who run up against these problems. Growing prosperity and a sense of adventure have produced a vogue for overseas marriage-cum-holiday packages. Getting married in a bikini on the beach is no longer a problem for specialist companies and big-name travel operators alike, which offer all-in deals complete with "ceremony, marriage and certificate". The operators arrange the details so that "when you arrive at your destination you will have nothing to worry about."

But what if your final destination is the divorce court? Being married by a Buddhist monk on the slopes of Everest may produce great snaps for the family album — but has the monk got the right authorisation from the local civil authorities?

Already a number of holiday companies have made their way to leading travel lawyers to check on how they stand. After all, if a marriage turned out to be invalid, could the disappointed holidaymakers come back for redress?

Peter Steward of Field Fisher Waterhouse is clear on his advice: "I advise travel companies to give the clients the full



Randy Gerber and Cindy Crawford, like thousands of couples, married in an exotic location

facts," he says. "They should suggest that their customers take legal advice first. And they should make it clear that they accept no responsibility for anything that might subsequently go wrong."

Start to investigate the small print, even in England and Wales, and the situation soon becomes complicated. For example, to be declared null, a marriage can be either void or voidable. It will be void, when the parties are within the prohibited degrees of relationship or if either of them is under 16 or if either was already married. It will be voidable if the marriages have not been consummated or if either partner did not validly consent to it or, at the time of the marriage, the respondent was pregnant by some person other than the petitioner.

Then there is the matter of reading the banns in church and of the service being conducted by qualified officiants (rather than a work experience youth — as happened recently in one Anglican church).

For many people, the religious context may be more im-

portant than the civil. All Anglican clergymen ordained for a year can solemnise marriages but for Roman Catholics, Quakers, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, different regulations apply.

Father John Nelson of Portsmouth's Catholic diocese, an expert in canonical law, says that every effort is made to work with the civil authorities. So although the Catholic Church does not recognise a register office wedding, a civil divorce would be required before they could marry again in a Catholic service.

Because of the potential for complexity, there is a growing belief in England and Wales that prenuptial contracts, which are not yet binding in our courts, may offer a way forward. Mr George comments: "To avoid an argument, many people prefer to have a straightforward, enforceable contract." So if you decide to go for the turkey on the hill in the saffron robes, be sure to sign a prenuptial before getting the ring. And make sure your travel agent pre-books the divorce in Mexico.

whether to keep the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund or allow firms to obtain insurance on the open market.

Now it is to look at a new idea from the consultancy Aon Risk, which would give firms a choice of the open market or an insurance package devised by the society.

□ Simmons & Simmons is having a tough year. After an exodus of several high-profile partners, Alan Morris, the accountant who was made managing partner in 1996, is leaving before the end of his three-year term, amid speculation that partners are losing confidence in the running of the firm. David Dickinson, managing partner of the banking and capital markets group, was one of only two who went for the job and was victorious. His first task? To stem the flow of partners and get them to stomp up £7 million to fit out planned new offices.

Law. Lord Denning, its president, was a founding member.

□ Bar noses have been put out of joint by the Chilean Government's choice of QC for General Pinochet: the Herbert Smith partner Lawrence Collins, who is one of the first solicitor QCs.

□ The Law Society is desperate for a way out of the profession's negligence-insurance crisis. Last week the council debated

Skeleton argument that may harm civil justice

In March 1989, Lord Donaldson of Lynton, then Master of the Rolls, made a practice direction introducing a requirement that counsel file a skeleton argument before the hearing of a civil appeal. There is concern among practitioners that the most recent practice direction in this area, which comes fully into effect next Monday, will greatly reduce the value of these skeleton arguments and damage civil justice.

As the 1989 practice direction explained, a skeleton argument is a written summary which identifies the principal points and draws attention to the relevant legal authorities. Its main purpose is to assist the judge to prepare for the hearing, thereby ensuring that the oral argument for the appeal can focus on the central issues in dispute between the parties. This reduces the time spent in court, and limits the costs for litigants and the legal system.

By advancing these objectives, the skeleton argument has been one of the most significant improvements in civil procedure in the past 50 years, and not just in the Court of Appeal. A similar requirement has been imposed in other civil courts.

The 1989 practice direction imposed a deadline for the filing of skeleton arguments of four weeks before a fixed hearing date. In 1990 this was reduced to 14 days. That remained the normal rule until the recent practice direction issued by Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, last November after "consultation with the members of the Court of Appeal", as the direction records. The new standard rule is that the appellant must include a skeleton argument when filing the appeal bundle of documents, within 14 days of the appeal appearing in the list of forthcoming appeals. The respondent must then lodge a reply skeleton argument within 21 days of receipt of the appellant's skeleton argument. This will mean that there is an obligation to prepare and file skeleton arguments at an earlier stage of the appeal proceedings. The date by which an appellant must file a bundle of documents is typically many months before the hearing. In judicial review cases, the skeleton arguments will need to be filed about six months before the appeal is heard. The new practice direction adds that a supplemental or revised skeleton argument may not be lodged without the court's permission, and such permission will be granted only if there is good reason for doing so.

The requirement to file skeleton arguments early in the appeal proceedings is unfortunate. There will be four main disadvantages.

First, because the work will be done so long before the appeal hearing that the skeleton arguments will decline in quality and focus, and will not provide as much assistance to the court as a skeleton argument filed close to the hearing date. No doubt the previous 14-day rule was based on Dr Johnson's principle that "when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully".

Secondly, in areas of the law (such as public law and employment law) where developments are rapid, the skeleton argument will often need amendment by the time of the hearing if it is to address current legal principles. Thirdly, lawyers will now need fully to prepare the case twice, once for the skeleton argument and again for the hearing months later. At present, that occurs only when counsel has to be instructed to obtain leave to appeal, and not where such leave has already been granted by the lower court or tribunal. Appellate litigation will become more expensive for clients.

Fourthly, counsel previously knew when they had a duty to file a skeleton argument because it was based on the hearing date in their diary. The new rule focuses on the date notified to the solicitor for the case entering the list of forthcoming appeals. Counsel will now be dependent on the solicitor giving them that information. Delays in communication will inevitably mean that skeleton arguments will be prepared in even more of a rush than they are at present.

These detriments are not outweighed by any positive benefit from skeleton arguments being filed so much earlier. The judges are not going to read them until just before the hearing of the appeal. The duty to provide a skeleton argument at the early stage is unlikely to deter unmeritorious appeals. The requirement for sequential filing of skeleton arguments is an improvement on the previous procedure by making it more likely that the respondent's document will answer the one filed by the appellant. But that objective does not require the documents to be presented so long in advance of the hearing date.

Mr Justice Cardozo of the United States Supreme Court gave warning that changes to civil procedure must not "multiply impediments to justice without the warrant of clear necessity". The Court of Appeal should re-think its practice direction.

● The author is a practising barrister and Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.



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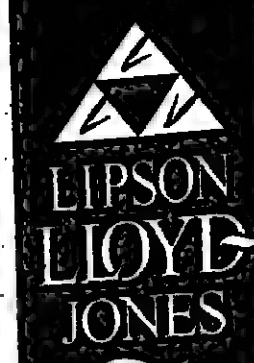
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A fatal mistake for any candidate is to show lack of respect. Your interviewers, during your interview, are the most important people in your world. Always take them seriously.
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Playing by the rules

Why is the OFT tackling football's Premier League? Report by Richard Prowse

The Restrictive Practices Court is being asked to blow the whistle on the FA Premier League and to show a red card to its lucrative television deals.

In a case brought by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), the UK's competition law watchdog, the Premier League stands accused of operating as an illegal cartel. The alleged offence is the practice of the league's clubs collectively selling their television rights to BSkyB (40 per cent owned by News International, owner of The Times) and the BBC.

The case, which started on January 12, has been surrounded by much rhetoric and confusion. Unusually, we have seen Tony Banks, the Sports Minister, criticising a government of his own. Talk abounds in football circles of the collapse of the Premier League and critics say that the sport as we know it is under threat.

Of course, football is a highly emotive topic at the heart of Britain's culture. But we should all, Tony Banks included, step back and focus realistically on why the OFT has brought the case.

The issue is whether, and how, competition law should apply to sport and what the future holds. The case brought by the OFT is based on a straightforward application of competition rules. If we take a dispassionate view, it is difficult to find fault with the OFT's argument. English Premier League clubs are banding together in order to sell their product, the television rights to FA Carling Premiership football.

From a purely economic and legal stance, this eliminates any competition between them and means that they are able to use their collective muscle to negotiate price and limit the choice of matches screened. The result, potentially,



The film of Nick Hornby's *Fever Pitch*: football is a topic at the heart of Britain's culture

is that the consumer pays more and sees less. If the televised football market was not restricted by the existence of a cartel, the argument is that clubs would then sell their rights individually and in competition with each other, resulting in lower prices and more matches on more channels. This is how markets operate in other industries and, in effect,

the OFT is applying the same principles to football as it would to any other business activity. If in any other industry a similar horizontal cartel were established, people would want to be assured that the OFT believed it to be operating for consumers' benefit. A cartel of petrol companies, for example, agreeing the selling

price of a litre of fuel, would almost certainly be illegal, because it would keep prices artificially high. "Football is a sport that happens to be a business that happens to be a sport," Mr Banks says. This is a good soundbite, but it means nothing. The OFT is not examining the game of football, but rather the way in

which it conducts its business, and it is right to do so. What Mr Banks should be concentrating on is not whether the OFT should have the right to examine the business of football, but whether the way football is run is in the interest of consumers and the game.

There is no reason a football club should not have its conduct and agreements scrutinised under the competition rules and this has long been recognised in Europe. The Bosman ruling on transfers, which means that players are free to move without their clubs being able to demand a transfer fee, is now an established part of the game in England and the whole of Europe. Football generates billions of pounds a year and national competition authorities have a duty to keep under review an industry of this size.

In applying the rules, the OFT should, of course, recognise the special nature of football. It may well be necessary to apply the competition laws in the light of the fact that unrestricted business competition may give too much power to the media companies and large clubs and drive weaker rivals out of business. This would take from football the very thing that it thrives upon: teams, competition and a special place in our culture.

The court case cannot be considered in isolation from other recent events. BSkyB has played a clever game — its bid for Manchester United means that it has an insurance policy should this court case go the wrong way. It is difficult to see the Premier League losing this case and also BSkyB being prevented from completing the acquisition.

It is also worth noting that the fact a court case has been necessary to air the issues of broadcasting rights highlights the inadequacies of the present legal structure. In future, and with the introduction of the Competition Act in March 2000, it is likely that such problems will be addressed before contracts are signed under the new UK clearance regime.

● The author, a partner at Everheds, specialises in EU and competition law.

Why the entente is not so cordiale

They are aggressive, arrogant and uncouth. These are some of the more pleasant things the French say about English lawyers. Anger has been growing over the rapid expansion of the Parisian offices of City law firms, culminating in a vitriolic article in the news magazine *Le Point* this month denouncing "English imperialism".

Gallic *exotisme* complained about the way their British counterparts had headhunted top Parisian commercial lawyers, and sometimes teams of lawyers, with promises of earnings of more than £100,000 a year.

The controversy has arisen because City firms are attempting to strengthen their presence on the Continent, particularly in Paris and Frankfurt. Most have tried to expand through alliances with continental partners. Linklaters, for example, last year announced a federation with German, Belgian, Dutch and Swedish firms. Cameron McKenna is planning a similar move.

But such associations do not always run smoothly, especially when they run into Franco-British hostility. Last June, for instance, France's largest cabinet, Gide-Loyrette-Noel, broke off a ten-year association with Allen & Overy.

Then, last month, another French firm, de Pardieu, abandoned plans for an alliance with Allen & Overy. Lucie Maurel-Aubert, a lawyer at Gide, told *Le Point*: "They wanted to impose their own brand name and to take our markets. We wanted an association where we would complement each other."

That was bad enough for Gide, which, with 350 lawyers and an annual turnover of Fr600 million (about £63 million), is a giant by French standards. But worse followed as five of its leading commercial lawyers left for Allen & Overy, another ten for Linklaters and one, last week, for Freshfields.

Other French firms also face what they deem to be unwarranted attacks of this sort. Olivier Pichot, a partner specialising in legal recruitment with the international headhunters Tasa Worldwide, claims: "The English have an approach that is aggressive and colonialist. They think they may lose out because Britain is not in the euro, so they are trying to buy up whole teams and structures in Paris in the hope of becoming operational here very quickly."

M Pichot says that City law firms have been promising to double the revenue of French lawyers earning between Fr500,000 and Fr700,000 a year. "But this approach is bound to fail," he says. "They have been going to the crime of Parisian lawyers and saying 'How much do you want? We are pre-

pared to buy you.' They are often turned down because they do not realise that though the French may be ready to sell themselves, they do not want to lose their identity. The English have tried to go too fast, and they have made too many mistakes."

French lawyers say that their firms are smaller, their development stunted by the codified system that leaves less room for legal manoeuvre than under the common law tradition, and less cut-throat.

A senior partner in a Parisian firm, who asked not to be named, says: "The only thing that seems to matter to the English is money. The City firms are real economic war machines that hardly care about the law at all. Here, we see ourselves much more as a fraternity concerned with our profession."

The City, not unnaturally, views things differently, as Stephan Denyer, the regional managing partner for Europe at Allen & Overy, argues: "What we are seeking is long-term, measured development and we would be silly to do things in an unnecessarily aggressive way. We do not go around luring people in Paris or anywhere else, but it is a case that good lawyers are attracted to us because of our development."

The firm's Paris office, he explains, employs 37 people and has doubled in size over recent months, as has the Frankfurt bureau. Within four years, only half of Allen & Overy lawyers in its offices around the world will be British, compared with 70 per cent at present. "This," he adds, "is due to client demand."

Peter Kent, a senior partner at the Paris office of Slaughter & May, says: "I know that some French firms have criticised the London law firms in Paris for engaging in what they consider to be competitive practices, but I do not subscribe to this view. You cannot criticise the English firms for what they have done. It has all been legitimate. They have simply been good at promoting themselves."

Gilles August, the founder of August et Debouzy, one of the few Parisian firms to flourish in recent years, agrees. "The English are aggressive, but you cannot hold that against them," he says. "They have the right to do what they have done. The French must simply follow their example. They are entirely capable of doing so. That is the law of business. You adapt or you die."

The English are aggressive and colonialist

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The people's judge: Lord Denning celebrates his centenary

Brilliant, unpretentious and a judicial activist, Lord Denning is Britain's most treasured senior judge. By Frances Gibb

If judges had popularity ratings, Lord Denning would top the poll. He is the student's judge, the people's judge and, above all, the people's judge. Litigants in person loved him, and he was a gift to the media. Whenever I rang him for a comment about a colleague he was happy to respond, and the rejoinder was always: "Say something nice about him, won't you?"

Last Saturday more than 170 lawyers and judges met at the University of Buckingham to say something nice about Lord Denning on his 100th birthday and pay tribute to his contribution to the law over 38 years as a judge, 20 of them as Master of the Rolls. Unfortunately, the guest of honour was too frail to attend.

Mention Lord Denning's name and people think of his Hampshire burr and the style of his judgments — short, simple sentences of startling clarity. But his legacy to the law itself is, arguably, unrivalled. Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, says: "Many of his decisions were ahead of his day and only years later became accepted as representing the law."

In one dissenting judgment, he said that if a person gives negligent advice, he can be held liable to any person acting on that advice. Some 15 years later, the law lords followed him. In his many rulings in civil disputes, Lord Denning also helped to lay the foundations for what is now mainstream law — judicial review, allowing individuals to succeed in challenging abuses

of power by authorities or big corporations. "He put the Court of Appeal's civil division on the map," Lord Woolf says. "Until his time, on the whole it was the great criminal cases that caught the public imagination. With him, for the first time, it was civil cases; because he was protecting the little man against the big battalions."

Lord Woolf, who appeared before Lord Denning as a young advocate, remembers his patience at a time when it was the

norm for judges to be crusty and impatient. "When I was just starting out as a Treasury junior, I was a bit out of my depth in one difficult case and he guided me through." When Lord Woolf was promoted to the Court of Appeal, a big occasion for him and his family, he recalls Lord Denning being "extremely kind to my sons — they remember that more than anything else that day".

As for sitting with him as a fellow judge, Lord Donaldson of Lynton — who succeeded Lord Denning on his retirement in 1982 — recalls his brilliant mind and "total-recall memory. He could skim through the whole of the argument in his mind."

But there were dangers, he added, sitting as the second judge with Lord Denning. "He might think about a case overnight before giving judgment, and then come to the conclusion that what he had decided was wrong."

A judicial activist, Lord Denning did not believe in judges leaving things to Parliament: they had to provide an instant



remedy for the individual. If the law was unjust, then it had to be altered in order to accord with his notion of justice. Alternatively, the law would be interpreted to provide justice — what judges will increasingly do as the Human Rights Act starts to bite.

He himself cites the *High Trees* case in 1947, in which he ruled that a person should keep his word or bond; the many matrimonial cases that created the principle of the deserted wife's equity; and the cases correcting abuses of power such as that overruling the Board of Trade when it denied Laker Airways a licence.

On Saturday many other cases — from commercial and company law to family — were cited. Len Sealy, an emeritus professor from Cambridge, recalls the *Mareva* injunction — which enabled courts to freeze a defendant's assets when the plain-

tiff had not yet established his right to proceed against those assets — as one measure for which Lord Denning should be remembered.

Lord Denning does have his critics: he did make mistakes that the law lords subsequently reversed, and some of his views, particularly in later years, aroused controversy — for example, he was accused, to his distress, of casting a slur on the ability of black people to be jurors.

But he argued passionately that the common law of England regarded a person's colour or race as "irrelevant" in deciding his rights or duties. And despite deeply held Christian values, he liberalised the divorce laws, and treated cohabiting couples as married couples where possible. Likewise, his view of the breakdown of marriage was pragmatic: the divorce court, he said, should not penalise anyone.

As Professor Michael Freeman, of University College London, said on Saturday, Lord Denning is quintessentially English, with beliefs rooted in the Protestant work ethic and family. So it was fitting that he celebrated his birthday with friends and family in his native village of Whitchurch (he was born there, the son of a draper) with a peal of bells, a choir and the planting of an oak. Peter Post, who was his clerk and now manages his affairs, visits twice a week and they still enjoy fish and chips sent up on Friday by the local hotel, with chocolates and coffee to follow.

How will he be remembered? Sir John Balcombe, a retired Court of Appeal judge and one of the guests on Saturday, singles out Lord Denning's humanity: "He was a brilliant lawyer, though not everyone always agreed with him. And he was so nice to people in court... the most unpomp-

ous man I have ever met." Lord Donaldson speaks of his making the law available to the small man. Lord Woolf, who inherited — literally — Lord Denning's appeal court robes and whose career has followed a similar path, points to his kindness: "People would leave court totally happy, even if he found against them. He will be remembered as the champion of the little man and as a great legal reformer who had a vision of the common law that reverberated throughout the world."

● The papers from the symposium at the University of Buckingham, sponsored by Rowe & Maw, Bunterworths and Ede & Ravenscroft, will be compiled in a special edition of the *Denning Law Journal*, with a foreword by Lord Goff of Chieveley. For further details contact Viv Forrester, Buckingham Law School, 012380 814080.

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RACING: HANDICAPPERS CONFIRM IMPRESSION MADE BY CHAMPION HURDLER

Istabraq awarded top mark

By RICHARD EVANS
RACING CORRESPONDENT

AFTER the superlatives, the recognition of greatness. As of now, handicappers on both sides of the Irish Sea yesterday agreed that Istabraq was the best of the best. In the last of his three hurdle races, he was crowned champion of the modern era — and one of the greatest of all time.

Niel O'Brien, Ireland's senior National Hunt handicapper, awarded the J.P. McManis-owned seven-year-old a rating of 170 — up six — for his sparkling victory in the Aintree Champion Hurdle. He said: "I have been handicapping for 15 years and this is the highest an Irish hurdler has been."

RICHARD EVANS

Phil Judge, the British Horseracing Board handicapper responsible for rating two-mile hurdles, took a similarly bullish view, elevating Istabraq to 173 — 1lb higher than Alderbrook, the 1995 Champion Hurdle winner, and the highest mark he has awarded.

Although changes in rating systems down the years make it difficult to compare different generations, O'Brien is convinced that neither Monksfield nor Dawn Run — two of the top Irish hurdlers of recent decades — would have been rated as highly as Istabraq.



Istabraq is considered superior to Monksfield and Dawn Run among Irish-trained hurdlers

"I thought Istabraq was hugely impressive on Sunday," he said. "The race went according to script with the top two putting quite a bit of distance between themselves and the rest. I thought Istabraq's hurdling was superb, and Theatreworld, twice

runner-up in the Champion Hurdle. "French Holly probably gave one of his best performances and until the third last looked an outstanding horse in his own right. I thought Istabraq's hurdling was superb. He toyed with them."

In the same way that older generations of racegoers love to recall witnessing the exploits of Arkle and other greats of the past, O'Brien said Sunday was a special day "looking at a horse which in years to come people will say was one of the best hurdlers of all time. It is nice to be there when history is being made."

O'Brien's only slight reservation concerns the quality of opposition among the upper ranks of hurdlers in Ireland and England. "It would appear that Istabraq is a truly outstanding champion but in a time when perhaps those in opposition to him would be less than champions. "He's head and shoulders above everything in Ireland and with French Holly joint-top rated in England, he is probably quite a way ahead of anything there, but I would have a slight doubt about the overall competitiveness. If you go back to Sea Pigeon and Monksfield, who came just after Night Nurse, Comedy Of Errors and Lanzarote, there was a lot of cut and thrust. At the moment there is only one horse at the top of the tree."

With Aidan O'Brien promising that Istabraq will be even sharper come Cheltenham, the Smurfit Champion Hurdle is fast taking on the appearance of a one-horse race — unlike two other Festival contests for which entries were released yesterday.

Novice chases are risky undertakings at the best of times, but the chance of an upset is often magnified at Cheltenham, where all races tend to be run a stride faster than elsewhere. The Guinness Arkle Chase, run over two miles on the Tuesday of the three-day meeting, has attracted 58 entries — including 17 from Ireland — while the Royal & Sun Alliance Chase, staged over an extended three miles on the following day, has 88 entries, with ten of those submitted by Martin Pipe.

William Hill bets on the Royal & Sun Alliance Chase. 5-1 Nick Dunford, Unlikely to Succeed, 10-1 Kadou Nonant, Lord Of The River, 11-1 Spendid, 12-1 Gris D'Estival, 16-1 others.

Lingfield to inspect

THERE will be an inspection at 10am today to determine prospects for tomorrow's National Hunt meeting at Lingfield. Fergus Cameron, the clerk of the course, said: "We have had 3mm of rain since Saturday and it's very wet. "The forecast is for a dry night with some rogue showers, which is more favourable than we had expected. It looks as if we could be all right but there's a long way to go."

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LEICESTER

THUNDERER
1.40 Fortia Rosie Dawn. 2.10 King's Banker.
2.40 Sister Rosa. 3.10 Reach The Clouds. 3.40 Cherymore. 4.10 CELTIC SEASON (nap).

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT

SS

1.40 STONEVEY NOVICES HURDLE CHASE

(22.10; 2m 11) (5 runners)

1. 447 FOLLOWS DE CALL 24 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
2. 140 FORTIA ROSIE DAWN 18 (5.5) M Jones 9-11-10
3. 150 FORTIA ROSIE DAWN 18 (5.5) M Jones 9-11-10
4. 150 FORTIA ROSIE DAWN 18 (5.5) M Jones 9-11-10
5. 150 FORTIA ROSIE DAWN 18 (5.5) M Jones 9-11-10

2.10 BROOK MAIDEN CHASE

(22.21; 2m 7 1/2) (9)

1. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10
2. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10
3. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10
4. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10
5. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10

2.40 RABBIT HURDLE CHASE

(22.22; 2m 7 1/2) (13)

1. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10
2. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10
3. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10
4. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10
5. 32-2 EVELY BLESSED 16 (6.5) M Jones 9-11-10

3.10 DANIEL LAMBERT HURDLE CHASE

(22.23; 2m 11) (6)

1. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
2. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
3. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
4. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
5. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10

3.40 DICK CHRISTIAN NOVICES CHASE

(22.24; 2m 4 1/2) (4)

1. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
2. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
3. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
4. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10

4.10 CROXTON PARK HURDLE CHASE

(22.25; 2m 4 1/2) (7)

1. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
2. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
3. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
4. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
5. 1511 PLAY FAMES 27 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRANSFERS: 11 Henderson, 10 winners from 22 runners, 31.2%
JOCKEYS: 5 Sayers, 3 winners from 5 races, 37.5%
OWNERS: 11 Henderson, 10 winners from 22 runners, 31.2%
TRAINERS: 11 Henderson, 10 winners from 22 runners, 31.2%

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Lingfield Park 1.30 Hill

Storm 2.00 Haverhill, Leicester 3.00 Incepta, Pontefract
Park 3.20 Enigma, Leicester 4.10 Jason's Boy.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

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OWNERS: 11 Henderson, 10 winners from 22 runners, 31.2%
TRAINERS: 11 Henderson, 10 winners from 22 runners, 31.2%

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TRAINERS: 11 Henderson, 10 winners from 22 runners, 31.2%

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OWNERS: 11 Henderson, 10 winners from 22 runners, 31.2%
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LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER
1.30 Baaji. 2.00 Harpoon Louie. 2.30 Miss Hit.
3.00 Hyde Park. 3.30 An Executive Do. 4.00 Sharp Rhythm.

GOING: STANDARD

SS

1.30 SULKY MAIDEN STAKES

(23.02; 1m 20) (8 runners)

1. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16
2. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16
3. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16
4. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16
5. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16

2.00 DOW CART HURDLE STAKES

(23.03; 1m 11) (11)

1. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16
2. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16
3. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16
4. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16
5. 401 FAN-SO-LIA 11 (5) M Jones 4-9-16

2.30 ARENA ON LINE SERVICES (SHOWCASE HURDLE) (23.06; 5) (7)

1. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
2. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
3. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
4. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
5. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16

3.00 HANSON STAKES (23.08; 7) (5)

1. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
2. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
3. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
4. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
5. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16

3.30 SILKS SUITE HURDLE (TOTE TRIFECTA RACE) (23.09; 1m 20) (11)

1. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
2. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
3. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
4. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
5. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16

4.00 PHAETON HURDLE (23.10; 23.02; 6) (10)

1. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
2. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
3. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
4. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16
5. 3-21 TEAR WHITE 14 (5.5) M Jones 4-9-16

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OWNERS: 11 Henderson, 10 winners from 22 runners, 31.2%
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THUNDERER

1.50 Sadler's Secret 3.20 Enigma
2.20 Mr Jarvis 3.50 Satorini
2.50 Effective 4.20 Stormhill Stag

Timekeeper's top rating: 1.50 AYEM.

GOING: SOFT

TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

SS

1.50 FAREHAM JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE

(4-10; 22.02; 2m 2 1/2) (8 runners)

1. 101-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
2. 101-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
3. 101-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
4. 101-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
5. 101-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10

2.20 SELSEY NOVICES CHASE (23.07; 2m 3) (8 runners)

1. 201-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
2. 201-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
3. 201-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
4. 201-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
5. 201-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10

2.50 FORTSMOUTH HURDLE (INTERMEDIATE)

(24.03; 2m 11) (3 runners)

1. 201-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
2. 201-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10
3. 201-1000 LOND OF LOVE 25 (6.5) D McInnes 9-11-10



Paul Merson scores Aston Villa's third goal in their comprehensive defeat of Everton, the only match that scored Fantasy points last week. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Aston Villa victory opens six-point gap at the top

This week, because only one Premiership game has been played in the past seven days, there is no award of a weekly prize and no ON-Target numbers. Prizes will be rolled over to next week — so watch out!

The player list (right) has been updated to include last Monday's game between Aston Villa and Everton. As a result of Villa's 3-0 win, positions on our leaderboard have altered, with Robert Little's team, Broken Arrow, extending its lead over Phil Clarke's Shabadi United from a single point to an impressive six.

Note that the Villa victory, which included two goals (worth six points) for Julian Joachim, and three-point clean sheets for goalkeeper Michael Oakes and defenders Gareth Barry, Ugo Ehiogu and Gareth Southgate, will not count towards the next weekly prize; the weekly winner announced on these pages in a week's time will be decided solely on the points scored in games played on Saturday January 30 and Sunday January 31.

Nevertheless, the points scored in that game could be decisive in the race for the monthly prize of £1,000 plus £100-worth of sports equipment. The January winner of which will be announced next week. Any team including two-goal Julian Joachim as well as Steve Watson (who provided an assist for the third goal) and Paul Merson (who scored it) will have done well. On the other hand, Michael Ball, the Everton full-back who appears in many of the leading Fantasy teams, scored minus two as a result of

being part of a defence that conceded three goals, and the totals of many of the leaders could suffer as a result.

Remember that Watson and Merson, like Dion Dublin, were transferred to Villa from other clubs after the beginning of the season.

and may therefore be selected in the same Fantasy League team, as they are counted as still belonging to their original clubs.

ON-Target numbers will appear again next week. If your weekly team total according to the player

lists matches the printed numbers, follow the instructions to find out if you have won the weekly ON-Target prize of £500 cash, or one of the runner-up prizes.

Next weekend, for once, a full programme of ten Premiership matches will be completed on Saturday and Sunday, and there are some promising fixtures.

The first to catch the eye is the visit of Chelsea to Highbury, where Gianluca Vialli's team, shorn of much of its striking power, must try to breach the division's most impenetrable defence to guarantee a further week at the top of the table. Villa, behind them only on goal difference, face a tricky trip to Newcastle, who will be smarting at allowing Charlton Athletic a last-gasp equaliser in their previous match, and Manchester United go to The Valley, where the home side will believe that the end of their eight-match losing streak represents the turning point of their season. Unfortunately, they will have to prove it against a team that scored six times in their previous game at Leicester.

Elsewhere, Darren Huckerby, the in-form striker, will be out to see whether Liverpool's recent defensive improvement is real or imaginary, and expect a tight, low scoring encounter between Wimbledon and West Ham at Selhurst Park. Why? For the simple reason that, when they met at Upton Park, the Hammers squandered a three-goal lead, losing 4-3. Harry Redknapp, the manager, will be doing his utmost to ensure that there is no repeat of that defensive catastrophe.

CHOOSE YOUR PLAYERS FROM HERE

Columns show: code, name, club, weekly points, total points, value (£m)

60	W. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
61	P. Bunc	ARS	0	0	3.7
62	A. Marshall	ARS	0	0	3.7
63	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
64	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
65	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
66	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
67	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
68	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
69	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
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97	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
98	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
99	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
100	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7

FULL BACKS

101	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
102	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
103	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
104	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
105	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
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161	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
162	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
163	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
164	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
165	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
166	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
167	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
168	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
169	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
170	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
171	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
172	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
173	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
174	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
175	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
176	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
177	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
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184	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
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195	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
196	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
197	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
198	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
199	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7
200	M. Smith	ARS	0	0	3.7

LEADERBOARD

1	Broken Arrow	260
2	Shabadi United	254
3	Philly	250
4	Philly	248
5	Philly	248
6	Philly	248
7	Philly	248
8	Philly	248
9	Philly	248
10	Philly	248
11	Philly	248
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14	Philly	248
15	Philly	248
16	Philly	248
17	Philly	248
18	Philly	248
19	Philly	248
20	Philly	248

YOUTH LEADERS

1	Philly	248
2	Philly	248
3	Philly	248
4	Philly	248
5	Philly	248
6	Philly	248
7	Philly	248
8	Philly	248
9	Philly	248
10	Philly	248
11	Philly	248
12	Philly	248
13	Philly	248
14	Philly	248
15	Philly	248
16	Philly	248
17	Philly	248
18	Philly	248
19	Philly	248
20	Philly	248

Have you signed up for ON-Target?

The joy of ON-Target is that your team does not have to be brilliant to win a prize. Simply match your team's weekly total with the ON-Target number and you can enter the draw for £500. Enter a new ON-Target team using the coupon below.

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TENNIS

Powerful Spadea pulls the strokes to outwit Agassi

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT, IN MELBOURNE

IT WAS as poor a performance as any that Andre Agassi has ever given in a decade of largely golden memories. The player he dismissed as a "four-year-old" ten months ago shattered any lasting illusions that Agassi still has the substance to win a grand-slam title.

Agassi is unlikely to find so attractive an opportunity as at this Australian Open. A route once littered with barriers has parted like the Red Sea and yet Agassi has been found wanting. That knowledge will make Agassi's defeat one of the hardest he has had to bear.

Vincent Spadea, whose nerve held firm when Agassi briefly threatened to indulge in gamesmanship, was Agassi's first opponent to be ranked in the world's top 50. Agassi appeared impressive when roughing up inferiors in the early rounds, but he collapsed when matched, blow for blow, in this fourth-round tussle.

It was apparent last year that Agassi's eight-month absence had dulled the fizz from his game. He attributed his poor grand-slam record in 1998 to his fervent pursuit of a world ranking commensurate with his talent. This time, he

came here fresh and supposedly primed for the fight. He showed little of that in succumbing to Spadea, whose own attitude was faultless in a match rendered monotonous by die-for-die hitting.

The comments Agassi made about Spadea, back in March, clearly rankled his fellow American. So much so that Agassi, seeded No 5, has lost two subsequent encounters between the pair. Mind you, Spadea looked more like the vanquished when he related his tale of victory.

His slumped posture hardly squared with one who, in his own words, has just achieved his biggest accomplishment to date. "Well, I didn't end world hunger or anything extravagant like that," he said. What Spadea, the world No 44, may have done is to find a balance within his personal arrangements. His father, Vincent, has taken too paternal an interest in his career. Indeed, Agassi had also ventured that Spadea, 24, could scale the heights if he loosened his father's overbearing embrace.

Spadea made that break towards the end of last year and has reaped an immediate

dividend. He has never previously advanced beyond the fourth round of any grand slam; now he plays the unseeded Tommy Haas, of Germany, for a semi-final place.

Agassi opened the match as though affronted by Spadea's presence on the same court. He flailed wildly off both wings, racking up an error-count of suicidal proportions. "When I get a little discouraged, a lot of things start breaking down," he said with rare understatement.

There was more to it than that. Whenever Spadea struck a clean ground stroke — and he struck several — Agassi attempted to strike back even harder. It was little wonder that a host of pulped balls were tossed, at regular intervals, to the scrapheap. "He is used to dictating the play and running people around," Spadea reflected of his opponent, "but I am capable of hitting the ball as big as him." He also read Agassi's intent, often anticipating the direction of shot before Agassi had even swung his racket in anger.

So much so that Agassi appeared uninterested when Spadea served for the match. He made no effort to run down the last two points, and was humbled 6-1, 7-5, 6-7, 6-3 in 2hrs 40 mins. A count of 71 unforced errors told its own story about the paucity of Agassi's performance.

Spadea confirms Haas after the latter brushed aside Fabrice Santoro, of France, 6-2, 6-2, 7-5. Like Spadea, Haas, 20, is enjoying his most profitable grand-slam run on his second visit here. Unlike Spadea, Haas has yet to meet a seed in a tournament where those accorded that status have performed abjectly. At least Agassi was keeping good company.

Yevgeny Kafelnikov, seeded



Cap that: hard-hitting Spadea plays a backhand during his four-set victory over Agassi

No 10, escaped the rot yesterday. The Russian made hard work of beating Andrei Pavel, of Romania, who rallied from two sets down before succumbing 6-3, 7-6, 6-7, 3-6, 6-4.

Of the four men's seeds remaining, two collide in the quarter-finals tomorrow when Kafelnikov, of Russia, confronts Todd Martin, of the United States, yesterday accounted for Wayne Black, of Zimbabwe, in straight sets.

A significant upset loomed in the women's event when, on a sweltering day, Martina Hingis, seeded No 2, left the court for a ten-minute break after sharing the first two sets with Amanda Coetzer, the

No 16 seed. Coetzer, of South Africa, rallied from 3-5 in the second set before poaching the ensuing tie-break. Hingis, the title-holder, slowly frazzled in a 31-degree temperature that would have been considerably hotter on the court. She required 129 minutes, embracing 67 unforced errors, to see off the persistent Coetzer 6-3, 6-7, 6-1.

The break helped me to put my mind together and just forget about what happened in the second set," Hingis said. "But I had control of the match pretty much the whole time." In that respect, Hingis's comments were at odds with her on-court performance. Hingis faces Mary Pierce in

the quarter-finals. Pierce, the No 7 seed, overwhelmed Anna Kournikova, seeded No 12, in a match described by Hingis as a battle between the game's "blonde killers". That, too, proved wide of the mark as Kournikova, of Russia, distinguished 6-0, 6-4 under Pierce's withering ground strokes.

The two British boys engaged in the junior singles championship opened with victories. Mark Hilton, who made a favourable impression at the National Championships in November, edged out Bo Hodge, of the United States, 7-6, 7-5, and Les Childs, of Somerset, trounced Charles Savigny, of Canada, for the loss of only three games.

Graf and Seles still stirred by love of game

Julian Muscat savours the renewal of a rivalry that has been all too rare

AS Andre Agassi, one of the game's icons, departed inconspicuously from the men's singles in the Australian Open yesterday, two more advanced to a quarter-final pairing in the women's competition that evokes memories of a rivalry cruelly arrested in its tracks.

In a tournament yielding upset after upset, the senses were stirred when Steffi Graf and Monica Seles won through to confront each other tomorrow. It will be their fourteenth encounter since they first met in the French Open semi-finals a decade ago.

At that time, Graf, of Germany, and Seles, Yugoslavia-born but now a United States citizen, were the game's irresistible force and immovable object. Between them, they won 21 of the 24 grand-slam tournaments between 1988 and 1993 — after which Seles was stabbed by a supporter of Graf's when playing in Hamburg. The rivalry that was sure to develop was never to reach fruition.

The pair have met twice in the grand-slam arena since Seles, her mind scarred more than her body, returned to the game in 1995. In that year, Graf defeated Seles in the US Open final after one of the finest matches in memory. Graf duplicated the verdict in the Flushing Meadows final 12

months later. However, their lives have run along divergent off-court paths since Seles was stabbed.

Seles was troubled by the stomach cancer that ultimately was to claim her father, Karolj, in May last year. Graf, meanwhile, has been plagued by injuries and the scandal of her father and business manager, Peter, serving a jail sentence for tax evasion. These circumstances served to dilute a rivalry that would have eclipsed all others.

Graf, 29, has accrued 21 grand-slam titles. Seles, 25, has 12. Remarkably, Seles has yet to lose in the 39 matches she has played in Australia. The holder of four Australian Open titles, Seles is also unbeaten over 20 matches in Canada. Graf leads their meetings 9-4, but Seles triumphed in their only encounter here — in the 1993 Australian Open final.

These days, both women compete without the burning intensity that governed their respective youths. Seles — who prevailed yesterday 6-0, 6-3 over Sandrine Testud, seeded No 14 — said of her reunion with Graf: "I am really looking forward to playing her. The only reason both of us are still playing is because we just love the game. Both of us want to have challenges like this one."



Seles, left, and Graf have fought back after personal setbacks

RESULTS

MEN

SINGLES: Fourth round: V. Spadea (US) 6-1, 7-5, 6-7, 6-3, T. Haas (US) 6-3, 7-6, 6-4; P. Galbraith (US) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; T. Martin (US) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; Y. Kafelnikov (Russia) 6-3, 7-6, 6-7, 3-6, 6-4.

DOUBLES: Third round: G. Kuerten (Belgium) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; N. Pietrangeli (Italy) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; T. Pietrangeli (Italy) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; T. Pietrangeli (Italy) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4.

WOMEN
SINGLES: Fourth round: S. Graf (Germany) 6-0, 6-3, 6-4; M. Seles (USA) 6-0, 6-3, 6-4; S. Testud (France) 6-0, 6-3, 6-4; A. Coetzer (South Africa) 6-3, 6-7, 6-1; M. Pierce (USA) 6-0, 6-3, 6-4.

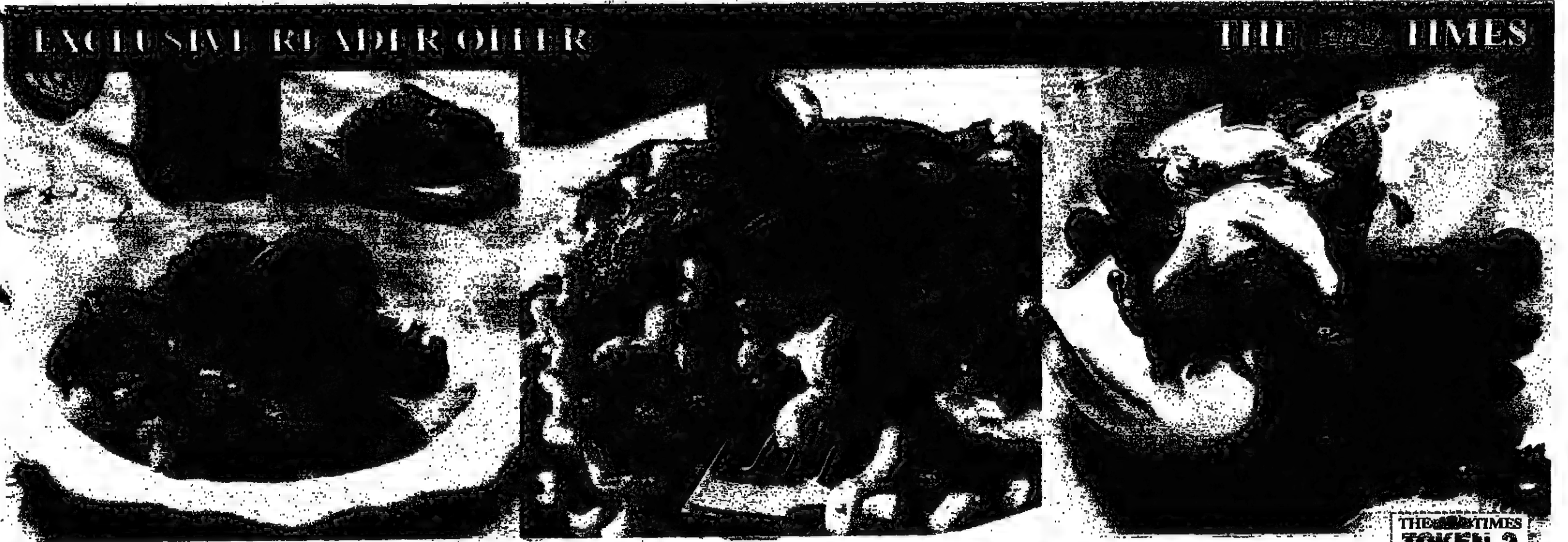
DOUBLES: Third round: F. Labat (Argentina) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; D. Van Rooy (South Africa) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; J. Hladik (Czech Republic) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; L. Davenport (USA) 6-0, 6-3, 6-4; C. Ciolek (Germany) 6-0, 6-3, 6-4.

MIXED DOUBLES

Second round: D. Johnson and P. Kimbrell (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; M. Lunde (Czech Republic) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; G. Hagedorn (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; E. Galbraith (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; N. Kuhl (Germany) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; M. Crampton (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; M. Lunde (Czech Republic) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; E. Galbraith (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; N. Kuhl (Germany) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; M. Crampton (USA) 6-4, 6-3, 6-4.

BOYS

SINGLES: First round (GB unless stated): L. Childs (GB) 6-1, 6-2; M. Hilton (GB) 6-1, 6-2; M. Hilton (GB) 6-1, 6-2; M. Hilton (GB) 6-1, 6-2.



EAT OUT FOR £5

Our new Eat Out for £5 Restaurant Guide, this year in association with Diners Club International, is bigger and better than ever. Given away free with yesterday's Times, the guide lists more than 820 restaurants throughout Britain, including more than 100 restaurants in the Forie group, where you and up to five friends can enjoy a special Times menu for just £5 each. A further 70 participating restaurants are listed today on page 44 and an extra five are below. Restaurants where you can dine out in style for next to nothing include the Warehouse Brasserie, Colchester, and the Falconberg Arms, Coxwold, Yorkshire, voted the two most popular restaurants by Times readers last year.



At a few eateries you get three courses for £5, and at some a free glass of wine is included in the price. Simply collect two differently numbered tokens from The Times and/or The Sunday Times and attach them to a voucher. The more tokens and vouchers you collect, the more restaurants you may dine in. Bookings must be made in advance and you should tell the restaurant you want The Times £5 offer and confirm what your £5 meal consists of. The offer is valid until March 7, 1999. Offer available in Britain only.

If you did not get a copy of our restaurant guide with yesterday's Times, please send us an A4-size one, with a self-addressed envelope, to: Eat Out for £5, Diners Club, PO Box 463, Customer Services, Level 6, Virginie Street, London E2 9BB.



THE TIMES EAT OUT FOR £5 VOUCHER

This voucher, with two differently numbered tokens from The Times and/or The Sunday Times attached, entitles the bearer and up to five other people to eat out for £5 each at any one of the restaurants taking part in this offer. You must pre-book with the restaurant, confirming the number of courses you got for £5. Offer subject to availability and ends on March 7, 1999.

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Address _____
Postcode _____ Day Tel _____
Which one of the following age groups do you fall into? ☐ 15-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+
If you buy The Times on which days do you usually buy it?
☐ Monday ☐ Tuesday ☐ Wednesday ☐ Thursday ☐ Friday ☐ Saturday ☐ Don't usually buy The Times
Which other national daily newspaper(s) do you buy on most days? _____
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Which national Sunday newspaper(s) do you buy on most days? _____
If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by The Times, please tick ☐

ADDRESSES: Trafford Room, Crowne Plaza Manchester/The Midland, Peter St, Manchester; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, 2 courses; Third 22; 0161-235 3333 The Cella, 36-38 The Cella, Leeds; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, 2 courses; Third 22; 0113-245 3870 Coppens Gourmet Gallery, The Copthorne Manchester, Clippens Quay, Salford; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, 2 courses; 0161-423 7321 Blakey Pizzeria, Regent St, Cambridge; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, 2 courses; 01223 355 478 and 01833 9392.

ADDRESSES: China Blues, Parkway, Camden, London NW1; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, Sun; Dinner - M, T, W, Sun; The Mosaic Arms, 28 High St, Mayday, Hampton, Nr. Clonsilla; Lunch - M, W, F, Dinner - T, Th, 2 courses; 01285 850184 Tulu/Auberge Tiboutou Hill Rd, Godstone, Surrey; Lunch - T, W, Th, F, S, Sun; Dinner - T, W, Th, F, S, 2 courses; 01352 862318 The Brasserie, George Hotel, High St, Colchester, Essex; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, Dinner - M, T, W, Th, 2 courses; Third 22; 01206 578494 Longfellow Restaurant, Hampton Lane, Catherine-de-

Barnon, Solihull, West Midlands; Lunch - T, W, Th, F, 2 courses; Third 22; 0121-705 0547 Golden Pheasant Hotel, Rusholme, Carlisle; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, Sat; Dinner - M, T, W, Th, 2 courses; Third 22; 01228 573686 Clematis Room Restaurant, Aurora Garden Hotel, Bolton Ave, Windsor; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, 2 courses; 01753 831384 Yeovil Court Hotel West Coker Rd, Yeovil; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, 2 courses; 01935 963746 The Sunway Chapel Lane, Carrington, Weymouth; Lunch - M, T, W, Th, F, S, Dinner - M, T, W, Th, F, Sun; 2 courses; 01305 832145

CHANGING TIMES

President likely to survive bribery scandal

Olympic family will stand by Samaranch

Why do old men cling to power when the circles over which they preside are tarnished beyond redemption? The joyride is over for Juan Antonio Samaranch. His court, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Lausanne, is discredited, and the uncomfortable road ahead is strewn with more and more inquiries, deeper and darker accusations.

The instinct to remain as head of this "family", as Samaranch calls the Olympic movement, may well defy all those who think the honourable course is for him to resign. The gratitude of the members, many of them involved in the circle by President Samaranch himself, doubtless will ease him through the vote of confidence to which he, grandly, has subjected himself.

However, even the IOC admits that Salt Lake City is not the only den of iniquity in what most see as bribery and corruption, and the president and his executive Olympians insist it is merely the breaking of their solemn oath. The worst fear in Lausanne is that the United States judiciary and the House of Representatives will now subpoena members as witnesses under a more exacting oath, in criminal trials against officials of Salt Lake City's Olympic bid.

That is the future. So are the claims that Sydney, Amsterdam, Berlin, Melbourne and Quebec, winners and losers in the bidding game, all spread excessive largesse to the Olympic family. Over here, from Manchester and possibly from Birmingham, there are cries that the foul nature of opposing bids robbed them of millions of pounds spent entertaining IOC members. Aside from the inevitable question of whether this "gross hospitality", as Manchester's Sir Bob Scott called it, was itself an inducement to look kindly on

Rob Hughes believes that the IOC must fulfil its promises to carry out substantial reforms

the Mancunian bid, the Olympic godfathers might point out that Manchester did not lose last time around to Sydney, but, in fact, came third behind China. However, Papa Samaranch is in an appalling mood. "We will study their (the cities seeking recompense) problems, and I think the IOC will give to them the just solution," he said yesterday.

Fine, and all this is going to be honest, transparent, accountable as never before in the Olympic process. As the ranks close, even those who stand in line to succession say this is not the time to impeach the president, we must assume that, barring more direct implication on his part, Samaranch will avoid his personal removal until his term expires in 2001. The vote of confidence, from the family, would be akin, after all, to asking the Democrats what should become of Bill Clinton, or expecting the athletes of all the world's games to sign and

to stick by a pledge never to take a banned substance.

So the best we can do is to be relentless in trying to ensure that Samaranch sticks to his word in spending the rest of his presidency seeking to ensure reform so that he could hand over the IOC to his successor with "the prestige it deserves".

Prestige? The word, alas, has almost fallen through the

Leading article 19

Letters 19

hollow rings. Two positive aspects have already emerged from the scandal. We learn that the IOC is to establish an Ethics Commission, composed of "senior persons, a majority of whom will be independent, outside members", and that, thank goodness, no longer will 114 members traipse around the globe with their goody bags, but an



Samaranch faces a vote of confidence by his members but he is expected to stay in office until his term ends in 2001

Beijing leads the backlash

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) yesterday began to widen its investigation into the "voices-for-favours" allegations surrounding other recent bids to stage the Games. With the Olympic movement reeling from the resignations of three members and the recommendation that six others should be expelled after the inquiry into the choice of Salt Lake City for the 2002 Winter Olympics, there are now fears that more revelations will damage fatally the world's biggest sporting event.

Juan Antonio Samaranch, the IOC president, has emphasised that the 2000 Summer Games in Sydney and Salt Lake City Winter Games will not be moved. However, an inquiry will now begin into the statement last week by John Coates, who led the Syd-

ney bid that money was

offered to the national Olympic committees of Kenya and Uganda before the ballot in 1993, which gave Sydney a 45-43 victory over Beijing. Coates has insisted that the offers were not bribes but part of an assistance programme for African athletes.

However, Zhang Honghai, the head of foreign affairs for the Beijing City Government, said yesterday: "Such dirty things should not happen in Olympic bidding. The IOC should be able to resolve this problem, otherwise the Olympic movement will have no future. We felt at the time it wasn't just sports factors ... but we never imagined there were so many other various factors in the background." Five Nagano residents have

joined the controversy by planning to file a lawsuit today to demand the return of £4.75 million of taxpayers' money, which went into the successful bid for the 1998 Winter Games. The account book, detailing how the money was spent, has been destroyed.

Kaoru Iwata, the leader of the residents' group, said: "We assume that the official subsidies were spent for such illegal purposes as excessive entertainment and suspected vote-buying. The burning of the account book itself supports the suspicion." Sumikazu Yamaguchi, a former external affairs officer for the bid committee, has said that he ordered the book's destruction as "there was no space for storage". He added that such records could be "embarrassing" to some IOC members.

Election Committee, comprising eight IOC members who are not on the executive board, plus three athletes, and one representative of the International Winter Sports Federations, be formed to ensure objectivity.

The IOC, the unimpeachable supreme body in sport, thus admits that it must be seen to police itself. It admits the need for an Ethics Commission, that the enlarged family could not be trusted to make the honourable decision.

We are getting somewhere, slowly. Questioning Samaranch, and his ability, at 78, to carry out reform, is not entirely ageist. Sir Arthur Gold, the retired London solicitor, is 82 and still president of the Amateur Athletics Association and honorary life-president of the European Athletics Association. "Principles have nothing to do with age," Sir Arthur said yesterday. "I believe either Samaranch was incompetent or ill-informed if he was unaware of the culture of gifts accepted by his members. In either case the honourable course would be to resign."

Gold, a fearless campaigner in his day against drug abuse, has little faith in a vote of confidence ousting the IOC president. "It will be an open show of hands by a body of men and women, over 50 per cent of whom enjoyed his patronage and cannot condemn him," Gold said. "There is a lack of courage, people will not stand up for principles."

He is aware that the Winter Olympics have a spin-off from income derived from the facilities for many years after the Games, but Gold believes that it is time to return the Summer Olympics to Greece, where they were originally founded more than a thousand years before the birth of Christ. To Athens in perpetuity?

"No, I'm thinking of Olympia where, close to the Mediterranean, we could create a site rather like a Vatican City."

The British, long ago, had their turn at leading and administering world sports. Our schoolmasters did not envisage the marriage of money and sport which, down the television lens and in the era of the satellite wars, have turned sport irredeemably into a gargantuan business, with all its bloated problems for security and potential for corruption.

Yet it was a Briton, Dame Mary Glen-Haig, an honorary member of the IOC, who questioned before the century modern Olympics in Atlanta in 1996: "Has the challenge presented by Pierre de Coubertin to the youth of the world been hooped? Are we guilty of bowing to man's desire for power in sport? Is there a God named Money?" Questions of weight indeed, questions that will not be answered until the bribery - sorry, misconduct - saga has run its disreputable course.



Prost, right, introduces his drivers, Jarno Trulli, Stephane Sarrazin and Olivier Panis, at the 1999 launch of the Prost-Peugeot team. Photograph: Michel Lipchitz

Panis launches bid to banish fear factor

THE one piece of baggage no racing driver can afford to carry with him to the 16 grands prix that make up the Formula One world championship is fear. Yet Olivier Panis confessed yesterday that he drove through last season knowing that a single accident could spell the end of his career. That fear haunted him at every race, a "dark cloud", as the Frenchman described it, that hung over him each time he climbed into the cockpit of his Prost-Peugeot.

His confidence was affected badly enough for both he and Alain Prost, his team principal, to decide on a cautious future and Panis, 32, has only a one-year contract. Prost said: "He needs to drive 100 per cent this season. Because the car was not good last year, it made his problems worse, but he can put that behind him now."

For a racing driver to admit to being frightened requires bravery, though Panis refused to unburden himself at the time either to Jarno Trulli, his team-mate, or to Prost. "Alain had enough to worry about without having to listen to me and my worries," Panis said. "But he has been behind me all the way

Kevin Eason on the anxieties that have dogged a bright talent of Formula One

since my accident and it was my confidence in him that brought me back into Formula One."

Panis had established himself as one of the sport's most exciting young drivers when, at Montreal in 1997, the suspension of his Prost failed and the car smashed into a tyre wall at 180mph. When doctors freed him from the wreckage, few thought that he could overcome the damage to his twisted legs and return to life at the top.

Panis thought he could, until the first grand prix of last season when he realised that the trauma and the after-effects of his injuries would play a substantial role in determining whether he could drive to the limits of his ability.

Doctors had warned him that they could not repair his right leg, fixed with two metal supports from ankle to knee,

if it was damaged again. Panis said: "Things were difficult in my head. I was driving knowing that a mistake could mean the end of driving in Formula One and that is not the way to go out in a grand prix. It was always there with me."

The answer was to book himself into a hospital immediately after the final race of last season to have the metal removed from his legs. The Olivier Panis who had a brief test in a car before Christmas felt revitalised and confident in a leg that had more movement and sensitivity to the throttle control.

If he is to return to winning ways, though, he will need more than his old bravery and skill. The Prost-Peugeot was unwieldy and unreliable last season. Alain Prost, designer of his world championship-winning McLaren of the 1980s, to try to create a new and more aerodynamic car.

Even so, Prost remains cautious. "We have to assume that McLaren and Ferrari will be in front, but then there will be several teams after that," he said. "We want to be competing with them for points. That has to be our goal for this season."

SPORT IN BRIEF

McRae awaits water pump appeal

MOTOR RALLYING: Colin McRae's Ford team will appear before an FIA court of appeal in Paris on Monday to find out whether their result from the Monte Carlo Rally will stand (Jeremy Hart writes). The team ran under appeal after their cars were found with illegal water pumps. If the team are not excluded, they will be free to run the rest of the year with the oversized pump. If, as expected, their result is withdrawn, the long-term future of the car will be decided at a meeting of the FIA's rally technical working group on February 4. At best Ford can hope that FIA will bring in a rule change to allow the water pump to be used for the rest of the year. At worst, the team could be banned from using the pump for the rest of 1999.

CRICKET: Ricky Ponting, the Australia batsman, has been suspended for three matches by the Australia Cricket Board as punishment for his part in a nightclub brawl. Ponting was also given a suspended fine of \$5,000 (£1,940). The 24-year-old Tasmanian has already missed two of Australia's one-day internationals against England and Sri Lanka because he was stood down after being knocked unconscious in a Sydney nightclub on January 18. Ponting is seeking counselling for a drinking problem.

SNOKER: Tony Drago and Mark King suffered surprise defeats in the first round of the Regal Welsh Open in Cardiff yesterday. Drago was beaten 5-0 by Stuart Bingham, ranked 164th in the world, and King, a finalist in this event two years ago, went down 3-0 to Mike Dunn, the world No 139.

CRICKET: Mark Taylor, the Australia captain, was named Australian of the Year yesterday. He follows Allan Border, a former captain, in winning the coveted award. Other notable Australians to achieve the honour include Paul Hogan, the *Crocodile Dundee* actor, Sir Jack Brabham, the racing driver, and Dame Joan Sutherland, the soprano.

BASKETBALL: Michael Olowokandi, the No 1 pick in the National Basketball Association draft, was released from his contract with Kinder Bologna, the Italian League club, yesterday, leaving him free to join the Los Angeles Clippers.

RUGBY UNION: PROPOSALS COULD SIGNAL THE END OF CROSS-BORDER FIXTURES

English prepare to leave Wales behind

BY MARK SOUSTER

WITH only five days until the scheduled deadline for agreement on the structure of English domestic rugby, it appears increasingly likely that proposals for an Anglo-Welsh league will collapse. Against the backdrop of increased opposition within England to the concept, including the unwanted spectre of a special general meeting, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) told Welsh officials on Sunday at a meeting at Drolwiche that they would accept only five Welsh clubs in a cross-border competition. It is an ultimatum to which Wales, which wants double that figure, will not agree.

In the unlikely event of the impasse being broken, it appears that England will stick with the Allied Dunbar Premiership, even in a restructured format. That places a significant question mark over the futures of Cardiff and Swansea, who would appear to have little option but to return to the Welsh league. However, the problem of the

ten-year loyalty agreement that both clubs refused to sign would still have to be confronted.

Asked whether he felt that English clubs were ready to turn their backs on the supposedly binding legal agreement, Gareth Davies, the Cardiff chief executive, who also sits on the board of English First-Division Rugby (EFD), said: "I don't know, but if they did, it would not say much for them. As far as I am concerned, it is a two-way thing. 'All our argument is about finding a level for a professional game. The way things stand, we can't negotiate with the WRU. There is no give and take. We wrote to them three weeks ago with a letter outlining what we felt - and so did a number of other Welsh clubs - was a workable, peaceful solution. We haven't had a reply yet.'

He will have more to say at an EFD board meeting in London,

which is due to hear an update on progress from Tom Walkinshaw, the chairman. Walkinshaw will outline various scenarios in the knowledge that the RFU will insist that the clubs will be liable for fines imposed by the International Rugby Board for playing the unofficial matches that have already cost the union £60,000 in withheld grants.

A senior official said: "The whole English game should not suffer for the action of the clubs. I think the IRB is understanding our position more and accepting the dilemma that our submission to the European Commission places us in."

The clubs themselves also realise that an Anglo-Welsh tournament could fall under the control of the Five Nations Committee, creating the prospect of continued turmoil.

In an attempt to allay the fears of

clubs in England and, in particular, those of Bristol and Worcester, the RFU reiterated yesterday that any structure put into place next season would be subject to the principles of the Mayfair Agreement with regards to the issues of relegation and promotion. It also gave assurances that any club affected in any proposed changes would be party to any discussions.

Martin Johnson plays his 200th first-team game for Leicester, the league leaders, tonight, when they meet Richmond at the Madejski Stadium in a match re-arranged from last week. With Stuart Potter injured, Craig Joiner retains his place at outside centre and Graham Rowntree returns at loosehead prop. Neil Back is doubtful with flu.

Richmond have named a squad, but the only definite non-starter is Adrian Davies. John Davies is expected to make his last appearance before finalising a move to Llanelli on Thursday.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Tuigamala helps Gateshead

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVING

WHEN Gateshead Thunder play their first pre-season match away to Castleford Tigers on Friday, they will have in their ranks a 19-stone Tongan wing recommended by Vaisiga Tuigamala, who is assisting the new JB Super League club in an advisory capacity. Epi Taione, 18, has been playing rugby union for Tynedale for 18 months and has spent four weeks training with Gateshead.

He is one several South Seas players whom Tuigamala is helping to nurture in both codes, although the Newcastle Falcons wing has no plans to return to rugby league himself. "Inga (Tuigamala) has some ideas about developing young island players and we have been talking to him about a million things, from race relations to education, but not about playing for us," Shane Richardson, the Gateshead chief executive, said.

Kevin Tamati, the coach of Whitehaven, has offered Tuigamala match terms to guest for the Cumbrian side in the first division over the summer, however. "He hasn't said no to joining us," Tamati said.

The one significant transfer before the Silk Cut Challenge Cup deadline expired last night was a move by Tony Kemp, the Leeds Rhinos stand-off half, to Wakefield Trinity.

The former Castleford and Newcastle Knights player has signed a two-year deal with the promoted Super League

club. Kemp, 31, struggled to make the Leeds side last year and competition at stand-off has increased at Headingley with the addition of Karl Pratt from Featherstone Rovers.

Maea David, the Western Samoa utility player, has joined Bramley, of the 1st division, from Hull Sharks, a year after a broken leg in a pre-season match restricted him to one appearance in the Super League.

SNOW REPORTS			
Location	Depth (cm)	Condition	Notes
Alps	13-77	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Kitzbühel	40-180	Hard	Hard, Varied, -Fing
Obergurgl	20-70	Good	Good, Varied, -Fing
St. Gervais	100-130	Good	Good, Varied, -Fing
Lake Louise	100-130	Good	Good, Varied, -Fing
France	80-160	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Alpe d'Huez	60-110	Good	Good, Varied, -Fing
Argentière	20-100	Good	Good, Varied, -Fing
Avoriaz	35-110	Good	Good, Varied, -Fing
La Plagne	60-150	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
La Tignes	64-100	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Les Arcs	69-179	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Megève	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Meribel	50-120	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Tignes	60-160	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Val Thorens	70-130	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Val d'Isère	65-145	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Valmorel	40-120	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Italy	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Cortina	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Livigno	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Norway	70-170	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Garmisch	70-170	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Cross Montain	70-170	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Grindelwald	25-120	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Klosters	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
St. Moritz	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Verbier	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Wengen	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Zermatt	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
United States	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Aspen	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Denver	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Steamboat	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch
Winter Park	30-110	Fair	Went, Bled, Garmisch

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11/10 SUNDERLAND 9/4 DRAW		LEICESTER 2/1	
Stadium of Light, Kick-off 7.45pm, Live on Sky.			
CORRECT SCORE		HALF TIME / FULL TIME	
12/1	1-0	12/1	1-0
12/1	2-0	12/1	2-0
12/1	2-1	12/1	2-1
12/1	3-0	12/1	3-0
12/1	3-1	12/1	3-1
12/1	3-2	12/1	3-2
12/1	0-0	12/1	0-0
12/1	1-1	12/1	1-1
12/1	2-2	12/1	2-2
Other scores on request.		Bets void if match not completed.	
		FIRST GOALSCORER	
5/1	PHILLIPS (S)	5/1	PHILLIPS (S)
5/1	QUINN (S)	5/1	QUINN (S)
7/1	HESKEY (L)	7/1	HESKEY (L)
5/1	COTTEE (L)	5/1	COTTEE (L)
5/1	ELIOTT (L)	5/1	ELIOTT (L)
14/1	CLARK (S)	14/1	CLARK (S)
14/1	JOHNSTON (S)	14/1	JOHNSTON (S)
14/1	ITZET (L)	14/1	ITZET (L)
20/1	SAUL (S)	20/1	SAUL (S)
5/1	NO GOALSCORER	5/1	NO GOALSCORER
Other players on request.		Own goals do not count.	
FOR PRICES ON ALL THE MIDWINTER FOOTBALL ACTION SEE CH5 TEXT PAGE 2/26			

IS APPLY TO OPER A CREDIT ACCOUNT PREPHONE 0800 289 892.

Collymore seeks help for stress and depression

By Russell Kempson

STAN COLLYMORE, the temperamental Aston Villa striker, is to seek counselling for stress and depression in an attempt to resurrect his career in the FA Cup Premier League. Neither Collymore nor John Gregory, the Villa manager, were willing to speak publicly about the latest twist in the player's controversial career yesterday, but a statement was issued by the club.

It read: "Stan Collymore has made it clear that pressure and stress have been building up for a long period of time, which culminated in the decision by the club not to consider him fit to play on Saturday. Following this, Stan has decided that he wishes to seek further counselling to help him overcome his current difficulties."

"Following extended meetings throughout the day with both Stan and his representative, the manager and board of directors of Aston Villa FC have expressed their desire to help Stan through his current problems, as it would with any of its employees."

Doug Ellis, the Villa chairman, was also unavailable to expand on the statement, which was made necessary by Collymore's failure to turn up for the FA Cup fourth-round

tie against Fulham at Villa Park on Saturday, which Fulham won 2-0. Collymore was believed to be angry at Gregory's decision to use him only as a substitute, but Paul Stretford, his agent, claimed that he had visited the club's medical staff and had been diagnosed as "fit".

Collymore took training as usual yesterday morning, but Collymore was not there. When Gregory left the training ground, he declined to discuss the matter. After the meeting between Gregory, Ellis, Collymore and Stretford, which went on into the early evening, the statement was issued with no further



Collymore's problems

comment. While there might be some sympathy if Collymore's apparent plight is genuine, many Villa fans have long been disenchanted by his antics since he joined the club from Liverpool for £7 million in May 1997. The ailment does appear to be catching, too, with Paolo Di Canio, the Sheffield Wednesday striker, and Mark Viduka, the Celtic striker, having cited stress for the recent absences from their respective clubs.

Collymore's day had begun badly when he learnt that he faces a possible driving ban. He failed to turn up at Birmingham magistrates court to answer a charge of driving his Range Rover at 82mph in a 40mph zone in Birmingham on August 25 last year.

With minds focused on Collymore, Villa officials had little time yesterday to contemplate the possible move of Juninho, the Atletico Madrid and former Middlesbrough midfielder, to Villa Park. Representatives of Atletico visited the Midlands for preliminary talks last week, but Middlesbrough have since emerged as favourites to resign the Brazilian.

Juninho played only as a 66th-minute substitute in Atletico's 2-1 victory against Celta Vigo on Sunday, but reaffirmed his desire to stay in Spain. However, Arrigo Sacchi, the Atletico coach, said that Juninho played no part in his plans. "I appreciate him as a footballer but the problem is that I can't play him and Juan Carlos Valerón together," Sacchi said. "We have two excellent central midfielders but when they have played together, things haven't worked out."

Osvaldo Giraldo, Juninho's father and business adviser, is believed to favour a move to Middlesbrough, who Juninho left for a fee of £12 million 18 months ago. Middlesbrough claim to have first option on Juninho and Steve Gibson, the club chairman, is due to fly to Spain this week for talks. Bryan Robson, the manager, is expected to accompany him.

Though Gregory acknowledges Middlesbrough's option, which is legally binding, he said: "That doesn't mean anything if the player doesn't want to go there."

Mario Vivien Fox is expected to make his debut for West Ham United against Wimbledon on Saturday after completing his £3.5 million transfer from Lens. The Cameroon international, who can play in central, midfield or defence, passed a medical yesterday.

O'Neill and Reid aim for same goal

By Mel Webb

THERE is much for Leicester City and Sunderland to play for when they meet in the first leg of the Worthington Cup semi-final at the Stadium of Light tonight, not least of which is the restoration of fractured confidence.

Both clubs were eliminated from the FA Cup on Saturday night, with a place in Europe's second round of the competition, both will be anxious to wipe the memory of such recent cup reverses from their minds.

The teams were busy playing the mutual admiration game yesterday, but when it comes to the action tonight, it is likely that quarter will be neither taken, nor given.

"Coming up against a Premiership outfit like Leicester, who I have a lot of respect for, is a tough test," Kevin Ball, the Sunderland captain, said. "They're a league above us and they're doing well. But once on the pitch, it's just two

teams having a right good go at each other." Martin O'Neill, the Leicester manager, regards Sunderland as a certain for the FA Cup Premiership next season, and has no illusions as to the task facing his side, who have conceded nine goals in their past two matches.

"Sunderland's priority is promotion and, although I'm sure Peter Reid will pour scorn on the idea, sitting pretty in the league might mean them not being fully wound up for a cup game," he said. "But we know it will be tough. Sunderland appear to be playing at Premiership standard already, and the difference in league status will count for nothing when we get on the pitch."

Tony Cottee has a calf strain and, if he unable to play, Muzzy Izet may have to move up from midfield for the second game running to partner Emile Heskey.



David Hacker and Carolyn Reid, who have been named Hockey Sport 1998 Club Players of the Year, show off their respective silverware in London yesterday (Sydney Friskin writes). Hacker, 34, is the first Welshman to receive the award. He made more than 100 appearances for Wales, though represented Great Britain on only five occasions, being unlucky to have missed selection for the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. He was captain and player-coach of Wales at the Commonwealth Games

in Malaysia last year and successfully led Wales in the European Nations Cup qualifying tournament. Hacker, a teacher at Millfield School, played most of his hockey with Hounslow in the 1980s but has since joined forces with Sean Kerly at Canterbury. Reid, 26, the England international who plays for Hightown, becomes the first goalkeeper to be honoured since Jo Thompson won the award in 1991 (Cathy Harris writes). She produced some excellent performances in

England's international build-up to the World Cup in Utrecht last year, and by the end of the tournament was firmly established as No 1 in the position. Though England could finish only ninth, her season ended on a high note with a Commonwealth silver medal. A teacher at St Nicholas Roman Catholic High School in Hartford, Cheshire, she captained England Under-21s at the 1993 World Cup in Spain, and has won several indoor and outdoor medals in European club competition.

ROWING: SCOTS SEE TRADITIONAL CHALLENGE ON THAMES AS VALUABLE ASSET

Boat Race finds sound investment

By Mike Rosewell, Rowing Correspondent

BOTTLES of whisky, rather than gin, were distributed to press men yesterday when it was announced that Aberdeen Asset Management, the Scotland-based investment group, will sponsor the Boat Race for the next three years, with an option for a further three years until 2004.

No definite figure was given, but it is known that Aberdeen Asset Management will be more than matching Beateer, the Boat Race sponsor for 12 years up to 1998, which handed more than £1.4 million over the last three years of

its involvement with the event. Not surprisingly, perhaps, the news was received with some relief by Duncan Clegg, the race organiser, who has been chasing potential sponsors since 1997, when Beateer announced that 1998 would be its final year of commitment.

Both the Oxford and Cambridge squads have had to adjust their training expenditure since September, but can now concentrate more fully on the task in hand, a fact confirmed by Charlie Humphreys,

the Oxford president, who said of the deal yesterday: "It makes our lives a lot easier."

Clegg said: "In the context of today's sponsorship marketplace, we believe this is an excellent deal. The support means that the Universities will be able to maintain their investment in coaching, training and equipment, which probably produced the fastest two crews ever in 1998."

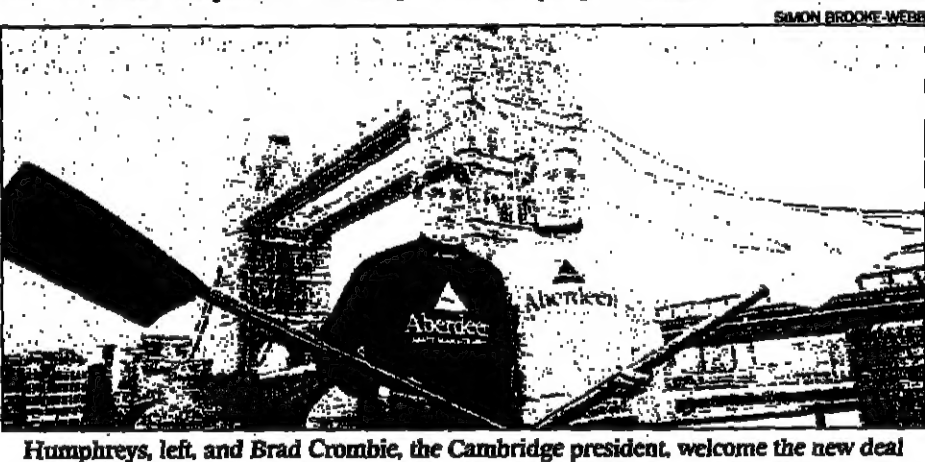
Aberdeen Asset Management manages investments in excess of £14 billion and is

quoted on both the London and Singapore stock exchanges. Martin Gilbert, the chief executive, said: "We are among the top ten unit trust sellers in the country, but our competitors are household names. We want more awareness and we think the Boat Race can give it to us."

Awareness could come from an event that attracts 250,000 to the banks of the River Thames, a domestic television audience of six million and a huge international following, with a potential 400 million people watching in 160 countries.

Moves towards the sponsorship announced yesterday began only just before Christmas when Fred Carr, an Oxford Blue in 1966, when he was a crew-mate of Clegg, mentioned the sponsorship search to an Aberdeen Asset Management employee. This set the ball rolling swiftly, in Clegg's words, to "a compatible sponsor that we can live with."

The new sponsor has no intention of moving the Boat Race to Scotland. "It's too cold up there," Gilbert said. Cambridge, with six wins in a row, will race Oxford on the usual course on April 3.



Humphreys, left, and Brad Crombie, the Cambridge president, welcome the new deal

FOR THE RECORD

ATHLETICS

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Damp it may be, but it's not on the rise

According to Raising The Roof (BBC2), the walls of your house can be wetter than Dale Winton and, chances are, you still don't need to pay any body hundreds — let alone thousands — of pounds to put in a chemical damp-proof course because it's extremely unlikely that you've got rising damp. This leaves just one nagging question in your mind: why aren't there more such programmes on television, lifting the lid on other unpleasant things that we have all long suspected were at best unnecessary, such as self-assessment tax returns, Supermarket Sweep, large parts of South Dakota, and the Rev Ian Paisley?

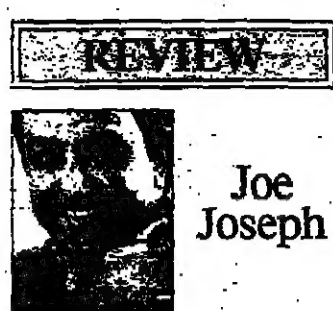
Doubts about rising damp set in the minute you set foot in Venice. Here is a city that is still standing after hundreds of years, and after thousands of floods. On the several occasions that I have visited Venice, not once have I seen a boat

chugging down a canal bearing a sign saying, "Gino's Damp-Proofing — we treat de wetta rotta and de dry rotta. No pallazzo too small!" In all the biographies of Casanova, you never once read of a time when he had to disappoint a lover on account of rising damp. "Can't come over to pleasure you this morning, love. I've got a man from San Marco Damp-Proofing coming round between 8am and 1pm to give me an estimate. He couldn't be more specific, what with all the visits he has to make."

The man we have to thank for opening our eyes is Mike Parrett, who works for Lewisham council as a damp-checker. "In the last nine years," he told us, seated, for some reason, on a boat. "I've not found a single case of rising damp in any of the properties I've tested. I've tested literally thousands." Often he solved the damp by installing proper heating and ventilation. At other times, an existing

damp course had been "bridged", enabling ground-water to bypass the damp course. Parrett is so sceptical that you could no more easily persuade him that Paddy Ashdown's decision to retire as leader of the Liberal Democrats will make a measurable difference to British politics than you could that a British house has rising damp.

Using the hidden camera technique he used to expose dodgy estate agents in the opening programme of the series, the presenter Paul Kenyon set up home in a wretched house that Parrett swore was not suffering from rising damp (there was leaky guttering, a blocked drain, a broken water pipe) and called in the professionals to sort out the problem. Nine estimates — to inject an un-needed chemical damp-proof course — ranged from £300 to well over £5,000. The companies Kenyon invited to survey the prob-



Joe Joseph

lem included some of the best-known names in the business. With luck their phones won't be ringing for a while.

Although Kenyon has the sort of boyish enthusiasm, and the boyish looks, that give the series the air of a particularly proficient school science project, he seems to be making a snappier job of old-fashioned investigation than many grown-up presenters are managing. Of

course, you might fear even more for the damp-proofing companies if Oliver Walston ever gets it into his head to wash their dirty laundry in public.

For the past four weeks in his series *Against the Grain* (BBC2), Walston, a barley harem from Cambridgeshire, has been doing his best to avoid being invited to the National Farmers' Union annual ball ever again. Walston has ruffled the feathers of many farmers by highlighting the more preposterous of the common agricultural policy, under this scheme Britain's farmers have manoeuvred themselves into a position that coalminers and shipyard workers never worked out how to wangle, in which somebody would pay to keep them in business even if nobody wanted their coal or their ships — and even if this meant paying them billions of pounds not to mine coal or build ships at all. Walston, who gets a

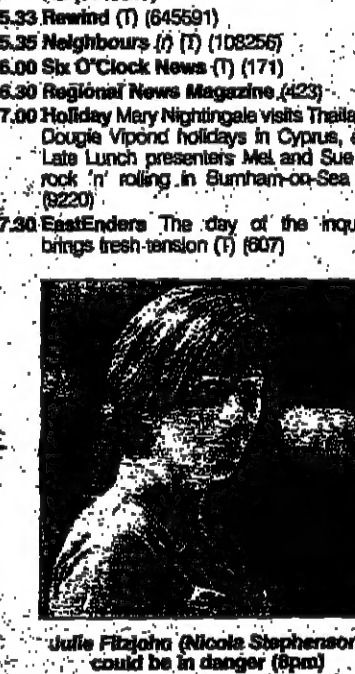
£180,000 subsidy cheque from Brussels every year, feels farmers should face the same market forces as hairdressers or dishwasher manufacturers, and that farming subsidies should be phased out.

This week he championed the use of agrochemicals and genetically engineered food as the only way to feed a world population that is growing by around 80 million people a year. Organically produced food may be the answer for those who can afford it — but what if you can't? Or don't want to? Walston doesn't think organic wheat or carrots taste any different, anyway. But even if they do, what role should the Government play in steering us towards them — any more than in steering us towards buying large, safe, expensive Benleys rather than decrepit, rusty, cheap bangers?

It has been a thought-provoking, frequently provocative series. In the process Walston has proved himself to be a television natural, with just the right mixture of arrogance and charm to command the camera. With luck we'll be seeing him again — unless Brussels decides it's smarter to pay him not to make more television shows.

Patsy Palmer waits ages to have a baby, then two come along at once. No sooner has she given birth on *EastEnders* than she's giving birth all over again in *Love Story*, shown last night in Channel 4's Shooting Gallery series of shorts. *Love Story* was written and directed by her husband, Nick Love, who cast Palmer as a pregnant heroin addict living in a subterranean hell-hole, whose big-mouth boyfriend is too busy chasing his next fix to attend the birth. I think that was pretty much it, unless I missed something. It made *EastEnders* look as stylish as a *Kurosawa* film.

BBC1
6.00am Business Breakfast (27626)
7.00 BBC Breakfast News (1) (83355)
7.00 Killy (1) (8207201)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (1) (5670171)
10.05 News; Regional News (1) (7546065)
11.00 Real Roads (7556442)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (7582201)
11.55 News; Regional News (1) (7595997)
12.00pm Call My Bluff (34794)
12.30 Wipeout (300442)
12.55 The Weather Show (1) (5580794)
1.00 One O'Clock News (1) (86442)
1.30 Regional News (8230201)
1.40 Newsround (1) (5692717)
2.05 Inside (1) (7303591)
2.55 Body Spies (1) (82882)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (8557888)
3.45 The Enchanted Land: The Adventures of the Wishing Chair (812249)
3.55 Hubbub (8039930)
4.10 Chipmunks Go to the Movies (832751)
4.35 The Really Wild World (122133)
5.00 Newsround (5009852) 5.10 Grange Hill (514817)
5.33 Rewind (1) (845591)
5.35 Neighbours (1) (108256)
6.00 Six O'Clock News (1) (171)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (423)
7.00 Holiday Mary Nightingale visits Thailand, couples holiday in Cyprus, and late lunch presenter Mel and Sue go rock 'n' roll in Burnham-on-Sea (1) (8220)
7.30 EastEnders: The day of the inquest brings fresh tension (1) (807)

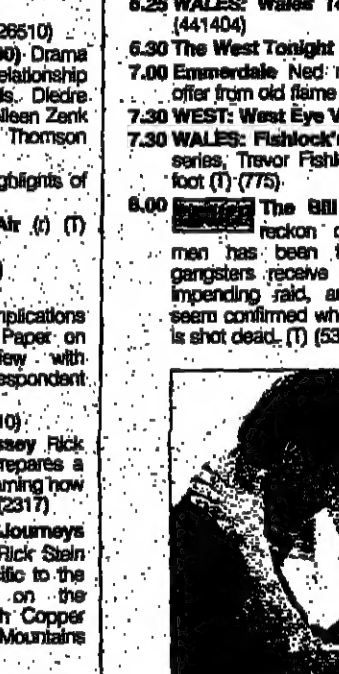


Julia Finkelstein (Nicola Stephenson) could be in danger (8pm)

8.00 Holly: City The staff of Canard Ward struggle to prevent a deadly infection spreading beyond the confines of Casualty's famous hospital (1) (871836)
8.50 8.50 to Paddington: Green Donquixote arrives for her first day at Sylvia Young's Theatre School in Paddington (2/8) (1) (21248)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News: Regional News; Weather (1) (2539)
9.30 Crimewatch: UK 150 A search for a serial rapist in the West Midlands (1) (15201)
10.30 Paddington: Green Locksmith Jason Osborne gets into a fix at the airport, while a disastrous prostitute Jackie Modelling books for the final touches of her plastic surgery (1) (44717)
11.00 Ladies' Night: Documentary unveiling the myths surrounding male strippers (1) (779997)
11.55 Crimewatch: UK (1) (452572)
12.05am The Honkers (1971) James Coburn plays an ageing rodeo showman whose marriage and career hit a rough patch. Directed by Steve Seid (740701)
1.40 Weather (8705973)
1.45 BBC News 24 (7589027)

BBC2
7.00am Children's BBC: Breakfast Show: The Little Polar Bear (8939779) 7.05 Teletubbies (257238) 7.30 Secret Squirrel and Co (3451265) 7.55 Blue Peter (2688510) 8.20 Taz-Mania (545688) 8.40 Polka Dot Shirts (877717) 8.50 Caddis Dicks (877350) 9.00 Daytime On Two: German Golem (7600265) 9.10 Working It Out (760892) 9.25 Techno (832442) 9.45 Numberline (8887978) 10.00 Children's BBC: Teletubbies (27055) 10.30 Daytime On Two: Watch (544688) 10.45 Sports Zone (3751697) 11.00 Sports Art (9224607) 11.15 Games (1068881) 11.35 Words and Pictures (2880064) 11.50 History File (2846133) 12.10pm English Express (4505133) 12.30 Working Lunch (5220)
1.00 Children's BBC: Caddis Dicks (73218045)
1.10 The Great Picture Chase (1) (82107510)
1.40 The Arts and Crafts Show (56931510)
2.10 Sporting Griots (22754084)
2.40 News; Regional News (1) (8597249)
2.45 Westminster (1) (8170238)
3.25 News; Regional News (1) (2528510)
3.30 Woman on the Edge (1990) Drama focusing on the close relationship between three female friends. Dedic: Hall, Leslie Charleston, and Colleen Zerk. Final cut. Directed by Chris Thompson (1) (75404)
5.00 Tennis: Australian Open: Highlights of the quarter-finals (1) (8133)
6.00 The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air (1) (800930)
6.25 Heartbreak High (1) (180881)
7.10 The O Zone (1) (948510)
7.30 From the Edge: A look at the implications of the Government's White Paper on Transport and an interview with wheelchair-bound war correspondent John Hockenberry (1) (249)
8.00 University Challenge (1) (8510)
8.50 Rick Stein's Seafood: Odyssey Rick visits a beach in Goa and prepares a spicy shark vindaloo before learning how to make an authentic dish (1) (2317)
9.00 Great Railway Journeys: Cornish fish cook Rick Stein crosses Mexico from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean, travelling on the spectacular rail route through Copper Canyon and the Sierra Madre Mountains (1) (872201)
9.50 Whitbread Book Awards Live coverage of the literary awards ceremony from London's Brewery (1) (866713)
10.30 Newsnight (1) (788682)
11.15 Behind the Mask (1) (82668)
11.40 The Larry Sanders Show (1) (182688)
11.55 Weather (404882)
12.00am Despatch Box (86447)
12.30 BBC Learning Zone

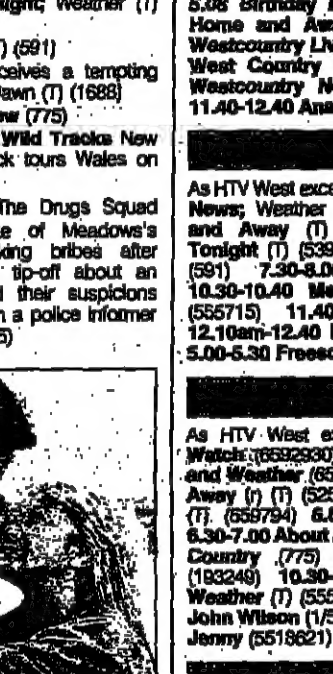
BBC3
5.30am ITN Morning News (30588)
6.00 GMTV (303682)
6.25 Trixie (1) (5103997)
10.30 The Morning (1) (24770607)
12.15pm HTV News and Weather (1) (8997778)
12.30 ITN Lunchtime News (1) (54046)
1.00 Shortland Street (51510)
1.30 Home and Away (1) (53317)
2.00 The Jerry Springer Show (1) (2437881)
2.45 Dale's Supermarket Sweep (1) (439084)
3.15 ITN News Headlines (1) (2524152)
3.20 HTV News (1) (2521065)
3.25 CITV: Mop-top's Show (2511888) 3.35 Role and Jim (804082) 3.50 The Wombles (8197830) 4.00 Cow and Chicken (812084) 4.25 Mike and Angelo (2037884) 4.50 How 2 (9700338)
5.10 A Country Practice (5250274)
5.40 ITN Early Evening News (1) (895355)
5.55 HTV Crime Reporters (869794)
6.00 Home and Away (1) (530784)
6.25 WEST: HTV Weather (1) (82220)
6.25 WALES: Wales Tonight: Weather (1) (441404)
6.30 The West Tonight (1) (591)
7.00 Emmerdale: Ned receives a tempting offer from old flame Dawn (1) (1688)
7.30 WEST: West Eye View (775)
7.30 WALES: Flashback: The Wild Trains New series. Trevor Flashback takes Wales on foot (1) (775)
8.00 The Bill: The Drugs Squad reckon one of Meadows' men has been taking bribes after gangsters receive a tip-off about an impending raid, and their suspicions seem confirmed when a police informer is shot dead. (1) (5355)



Adrian Lukis and Annette Ekblom star as David and Patricia (8pm)

9.00 Peak Practice: Andrew becomes personally involved in the heart-rending case of an old soldier who has a terminal brain tumour diagnosed (4/13) (1) (5591)
10.00 News at Ten (1) (20581)
10.30 HTV News and Weather (1) (555715)
10.40 The Timor Conspiracy: Indonesia's illegal occupation of East Timor (1) (867930)
11.40 WALES: The Front Row Special: Highlights from rugby's Challenge Trophy (1) (80661)
12.10am Tales from the Crypt: Collection Completed (551821)
12.40 The Haunted Handkerchief (5554911)
1.10 Highlander (1) (8306911)
2.10 Planet Rock Profiles (801466)
2.35 Wish You Were Here? (1) (7456263)
3.00 Judge Judy (1) (8197355)
3.25 Football Extra (1) (401282)
4.20 Coach Pat (8541938)
4.45 TV Nightmares (5891911)

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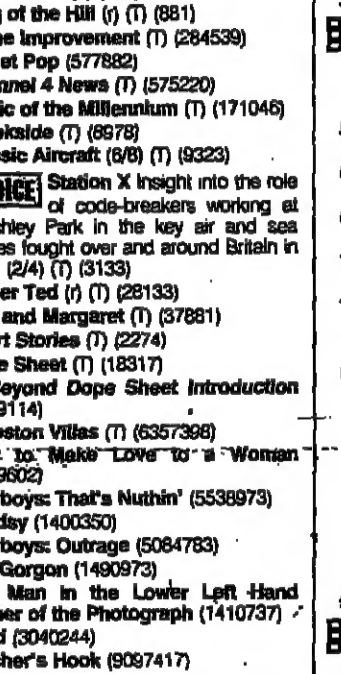
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CENTRAL
As HTV West except: 12.30pm Central News (8513423)
1.00 Headlines (51510)
1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (542978)
2.15-2.45 Home and Away (450713)
3.20-3.25 Central News (2521065)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (5250274)
6.25-7.00 Central News; Weather (441404)
7.30-8.00 Landladies (775)
10.30-10.40 Central News; Weather (555715)
11.40 Central Sport Special (485133)
12.00am The Haunted Handkerchief (5551824)
12.05-12.15 Highlander (1) (8306911)
4.20 Central Jobfinder '98 (371701)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (4857089)

As HTV West except: 12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News; Weather (1) (8997778)
12.30-12.35 Meridian News (8521442) 1.00 Meridian (1) (81510) 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (1) (2437881) 2.15-2.45 Home and Away (1) (530784) 3.20-3.25 Westcountry News; Weather (1) (2521065) 5.08 Birthday People (8128572) 5.10-5.40 Home and Away (1) (530784) 6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (1) (85029) 7.30-8.00 Wild West Country (2/8) (1) (775) 10.30-10.40 Westcountry News (1) (855715) 11.40-12.40 Anatomy of Disaster (918881)

As HTV West except: 12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News; Weather (1) (8997778) 12.30-12.35 Meridian News (8521442) 1.00 Meridian (1) (81510) 1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (1) (2437881) 2.15-2.45 Home and Away (1) (530784) 3.20-3.25 Westcountry News; Weather (1) (2521065) 5.08 Birthday People (8128572) 5.10-5.40 Home and Away (1) (530784) 6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (1) (85029) 7.30-8.00 Wild West Country (2/8) (1) (775) 10.30-10.40 Westcountry News (1) (855715) 11.40-12.40 Anatomy of Disaster (918881)

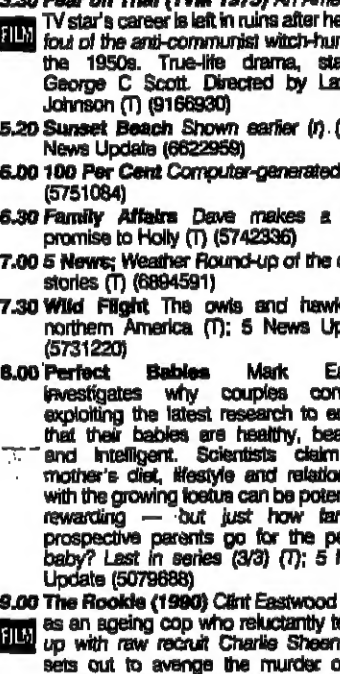
CHANNEL 4
6.00am Sesame Street (10335)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (56065)
9.00 Schoolies:
9.00 Science in Focus (8015775) 9.20 What the Papers Say (7825272) 9.30 Eureka (8877591) 9.45 Slop, Look, Listen (8872046) 10.00 The Number Crew (4510775) 10.10 TVM (8083338) 10.25 How We Used to Live (803171) 10.30 Worlds of Faith (545713) 11.00 First Edition IV (8016959) 11.15 Stage One (1) (8022510)
11.30 Powerhouse (1) (9442)
12.00pm Sesame Street (1) (27404)
12.30 Bewitched (1) (52888)
1.00 Pet Rescue (1) (82113171)
1.25 Roots to Success (1) (80614133)
1.50 Apartment for Peggy (1948) Comedy, starring Edmund Gwenn. Directed by George Seaton (1) (61151133)
2.30 Hampton Court Palace (1) (987)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (1) (404)
4.30 Countdown (1) (1256572)
4.55 Ricki Lake (1) (4367930)
5.30 Pet Rescue (1) (268)
6.00 King of the Hill (1) (1) (881)
6.30 Home Improvement (1) (284539)
6.55 Planet Pop (577882)
7.00 Channel 4 News (1) (755220)
7.50 Music of the Millennium (1) (171046)
8.00 Brookside (1) (8978)
8.30 Classic Aircraft (8/8) (1) (9323)
9.00 [CHANGES] Station X: Insight into the role of code-breakers working at Bletchley Park in the key air and sea battles fought over and around Britain in 1941 (2/4) (1) (3133)
10.00 Father Ted (1) (1) (28133)
10.30 Bob and Margaret (1) (37881)
11.00 Short Stories (1) (2274)
11.30 Dope Sheet (1) (18317)
12.00am Beyond Dope Sheet Introduction (8249114)
12.05 Capetown Villes (1) (8357398)
12.20 How to "Make Love" to a Woman (8035158) (1) (8035158)
12.25 Cowboys: That's Nuthin' (5538973)
12.30 Doolittle (1400350)
12.40 Cowboys: Outrage (5084783)
12.45 The Gorgon (1490973)
12.55 The Man in the Lower Left Hand Corner of the Photograph (1410737)
1.10 Food (304244)
1.30 Butcher's Hook (9087417)



Lee Marvin and Ernest Borgnine tussle for supremacy (1.40am)

1.40 Emperor of the North Pole (1973) Two train-hopping hobos jump on to one railroad car too many, and are confronted by a murderous conductor. Starring Lee Marvin. Directed by Robert Aldrich (1) (5300485)
3.50 Sheila (14183447)
4.00 TOP 2 (549447) 5.40 Place and People (3384468)

CHANNEL 5
6.00am 5 News (7435881)
7.00 WideWorld Part three (1) (8530084)
7.30 Millchuckall (4550107)
7.35 Wizzle's House (1) (8261897)
8.00 Havalakoo (1) (1601688)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (1) (8008959)
9.00 Weather Front (1) (2207171)
9.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (4236628)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (8053133)
10.20 Sunset Beach (1) (2651881)
11.10 Leeza (2548607)
12.00pm 5 News at Noon (1) (1604775)
12.30 Family Affairs (1) (1) 5 News Update (8470404)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful (1) (8539555)
1.30 The Restaurant Show (1) 5 News Update (9473775)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (880775)
2.30 Good Afternoon Lifestyle magazine, incorporating real-life soap Liverpool Mums. Selling the Family Silver with Eric Knowles, and word game Cryptogram: 5 News Update (4095339)
3.30 Fear on Trial (TVM 1975) An American TV star's career is left in ruins after he tells the tale of the anti-communist witch-hunts of the 1950s. True story drama, starring George C. Scott. Directed by Lamont Johnson (1) (9165830)
5.20 Sunset Beach Show: earlier (1) (1) 5 News Update (8622958)
6.00 100 Per Cent Computer-generated quiz (5751084)
6.30 Family Affairs: Dave makes a rash promise to Holly (1) (5742336)
7.00 5 News: Weather Round-up of the day's stories (1) (8854581)
7.30 Wild Flight: The myths and hawks of northern America (1) 5 News Update (5751220)
8.00 Perfect Babies: Mark Easton investigates why couples consider exploiting the latest research to ensure that their babies are healthy, beautiful and intelligent. Scientists claim the mother's diet, lifestyle and relationship with the growing foetus can be potentially rewarding — but just how far will prospective parents go for the perfect baby? Last in series (3/3) (1) 5 News Update (6592948)
9.00 The Rookie (1980) Clint Eastwood stars as an ageing cop who reluctantly teams up with a new recruit, Charlie Sheets, and sets out to avenge the murder of his former partner, who was killed by criminal mastermind Paul J. Lister. Action thriller, also starring Sonja Braga, Tom Skerritt and Lara Flynn Boyle. Directed by Clint Eastwood (1) 5 News Update (6592948)
11.20 Two Gun's birthday becomes a nightmare when both teams him for another series of murders. Thriller, starring Michael Easton (882323)
12.15am The Jack Docherty Show With The Cardigans (7902379)
12.55 Live and Dangerous: Action from round one of the AHA Supercross (8963802)
3.45 Asian Football Show: Weekly round-up (7015600)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (8367755)
5.30 100 Per Cent (1) (8055391)



VIDEO Plus+ and VIDEO Plus+ codes

The numbers after each programme are for VIDEO Plus+ recording. List the numbers (and the programme number) for the relevant programme into a video recorder for easy listing.
For more details, see VIDEO Plus+ on page 750701. Call charged at 25p per minute at all times.
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For further listings see Saturday's Vision

SKY ONE
7.00am Court Drama (81333) 7.30 The Simpsons (4828) 8.00 The Simpsons (7507) 8.30 Hollywood Squares (72979) 9.00 Saturday Night Takeaway (1) (8207201) 9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (81132) 11.00 Quiz (89588) 12.00am Jerry Springer (1573) 1.00 Late July (8206) 1.30 Jeopardy (7777) 2.00 Sally Jessy Raphael (7442) 3.00 Jerry Jones (45149) 4.00 Game Show (8206) 5.00 Saturday Night Takeaway (1) (8207201) 5.30 Married — With Children (1402) 6.30 Dream Team (8775) 7.00 The Simpsons (1223) 7.30 The Simpsons (1223) 8.00 World's Wildest Places (8258) 10.00 World's Wildest Places (8258) 11.00 Dream Team (22877113) 12.00am Saturday Night Takeaway (1) (8207201) 1.00 Long (8207201) 1.30 Long (8207201)

SKY BOX OFFICE
Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film, call 0800 800000. **SKY BOX OFFICE 1** (Transponder 20) Title and Error (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 2** (Transponder 20) The Winner of the Race (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 3** (Transponder 20) The Borrowers (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 4** (Transponder 20) The Winner of the Race (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 5** (Transponder 20) The Borrowers (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 6** (Transponder 20) The Winner of the Race (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 7** (Transponder 20) The Borrowers (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 8** (Transponder 20) The Winner of the Race (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 9** (Transponder 20) The Borrowers (1997) **SKY BOX OFFICE 10** (Transponder 20) The Winner of the Race (1997)

SKY SPORTS 1
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SPORT

TENNIS 47
Agassi crumbles to humbling defeat by old foe

GOLF 50

Duval shoots 59 to produce grandstand finish



TUESDAY JANUARY 26 1999

Sri Lanka await ban on Ranatunga

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN ADELAIDE

IT BECAME clear yesterday that Arjuna Ranatunga, the Sri Lanka cricket captain, who appears on a disciplinary charge today over his behaviour during the limited-overs international against England last Saturday, will be suspended, if Peter van der Merwe, the match referee, uses properly the powers invested in him by the International Cricket Council (ICC). If Ranatunga is suspended, it is possible that Sri Lanka will abandon their involvement in the triangular tournament in Australia and go home.

The transcript of a tape recorded by the stump microphone in that spiteful match reveals that after Ranatunga, had instructed Ross Emerson, the umpire who no-balled Muttiah Muralitharan for throwing, to stand close to the stumps, so that he could not observe the bowler's action closely, he then told him: "I'm in charge of this game. You'll stand where I want you to. If you don't stand there, there won't be a game."

Ranatunga was seen clearly at the time, making a mark with his boot, to show Emerson where he wanted him to stand. Earlier, he had led his players towards the dressing-room, after Emerson called Muralitharan for throwing, and was dissuaded from marching them off the field only after heated discussions with both umpires and with Van der Merwe.

Under the code of conduct regulations drawn up by the ICC, Ranatunga would appear to be guilty on five counts: failing to ensure that play was conducted within the spirit of the game; bringing the game into disrepute; showing dissent at an umpire's decision; intimidating an umpire; and using abusive language.

Ranatunga was not the only player to use abusive language. On the tape, Darren Gough is heard telling Muralitharan, the batsman who had deliberately run into him to avoid a run-out attempt: "I'll (expletive deleted) kill you." But whereas Gough was using language that fast bowlers have employed down the decades, however offensive it may seem, Ranatunga was trying to take over the game — and succeeding.

Despite the wretched incidents and the damage done to Muralitharan's reputation, Lancashire have reaffirmed that they are looking forward to welcoming the off spinner. Jack Simmons, the club chairman, spoke to Muralitharan on his recent visit to Australia and he said yesterday that he envisaged no problems when the bowler began his county career at Old Trafford after the World Cup.

Muralitharan is, genuinely, the innocent in all this. He has a defective right arm, which, his supporters say, gives the impression of straightening when he bowls the ball. But not everybody is a supporter. It is widely felt within cricketing circles that, however legitimate some balls are, others are plain chucks.

Viduka eager to make his mark at Celtic

BY KEVIN MCCARRA

IF CELTIC have lacked a maverick forward since the departure of the tempestuous pair of Pierre van Hooijdonk and Paolo Di Canio, the vacancy has now been filled with aplomb. Mark Viduka, who is eager to settle down and play, while relieved to find him on the premises, the club will view the Australian as a suitable candidate for electronic tagging.

He signed for Celtic from Croatia Zagreb seven weeks ago, but then revealed that he was suffering from depression and left for his native Melbourne two days later. Should his movement be as unpredictable on the field itself, defenders will never be able to pin him down. As speculation over Viduka's future trundled on, Celtic must have had thoughts of their own about his whereabouts, perhaps wishing that he was with another club entirely.

He is reported to have been offered to West Ham United recently as a replacement for John Harrison. It would show a callous disregard for human suffering to present Viduka only as a troublemaker, but he remains vague about the origins of his distress. The forward, who is of Croatian descent, did appear alienated at Croatia Zagreb and is alleged to have been involved in fights with a journalist and a supporter.

His previous club is an unusual institution. The fans' replica jerseys are not quite replicas because they bear the word Dinamo on the back. That is the original name of Croatia Zagreb and the alteration, never accepted by the crowd, was made to turn them into a vehicle of national identity when playing in European competitions. Viduka's links to Franjo Tudjman, the president of the country, may have contributed to his eventual unpopularity.

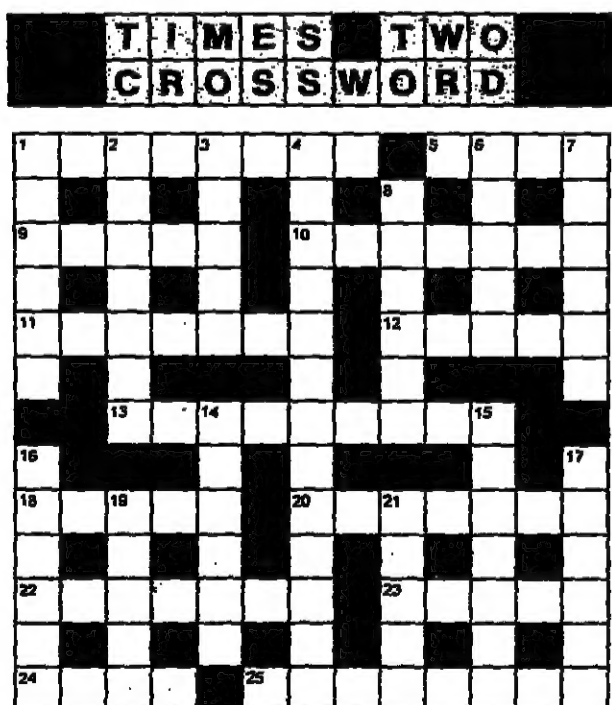
Having scored 103 goals in 165 games before this season, Viduka was once highly esteemed as a club he joined as a 19-year-old in 1995. "The situation changed and I was in the firing line," Viduka said. "When I moved to Celtic, I thought that I would be able to take the things that happened to me in Zagreb in my stride, but I needed time to get over them."

"There was a lot of stress and I was in no condition to play. There is no guarantee that it won't happen again, but I am ready to start playing now and to give my heart to the team." Viduka received counselling from Patrick Farrell, an Australian sports psychologist, who also works with Luc Longley, of the Chicago Bulls basketball team.

Sympathy for the forward is withheld because his psychological condition has never appeared to be the only relevant factor. H L Menckin, the great American journalist, once observed that when anyone claims that a dispute is not about money, one can be sure that it is about money. "It had nothing to do with money," Viduka told his new teammates at Celtic. It is an assertion that sits oddly with statements issued by the club.

Fergus McCann, the Celtic chairman, who has fallen silent since, acknowledged last week that complex financial arrangements were involved. It is understood that Viduka had a deal with Croatia Zagreb that would see him receive a percentage of any transfer fee and it appears that he is due at least £1.2 million of the £3 million price agreed with Celtic.

That sum, and the manner in which it was to be paid, seem to have been topics of dispute since Viduka fled Glasgow last month. Even now, Croatia Zagreb are claiming that the entire £3 million should be handed over to them and that any further distribution of cash is their responsibility. Only goals from Viduka can remove the scepticism of Celtic supporters.



No 1624

ACROSS

- 1 Freedom from sanction (8)
- 5 Two wives of Henry VIII (4)
- 9 France around (5)
- 10 Joint, the indecent near it (7)
- 11 The windpipe (7)
- 12 Big-Ears' friend (Bytton) (5)
- 13 Abducted: Stevenson novel (9)
- 18 Different (5)
- 20 Moscow chafed (7)
- 22 Rescue after damage (7)
- 23 Fielding position: ravine (5)
- 24 (Author's) script (4)
- 25 Sewn together (5)

DOWN

- 1 Urge on (6)
- 2 Moral-boasting speech (3,4)
- 3 'Up' direction (map) (5)
- 4 Refuse: leadership role (4,1,4)
- 6 Unclothed (5)
- 7 John — C17 diarist (6)
- 8 Vegetable: old watch (6)
- 14 (Eg fin) on the back (6)
- 15 Sanson's haircutter (7)
- 16 Pamper (6)
- 17 Without artificial colouring (6)
- 19 Spiral (5)
- 21 (Eg Oxford) rowing crew (5)

SOLUTION TO NO 1623

- ACROSS: 1 Wardrobe 5 Odes 8 Rebel 9 Disturb 11 Tot 12 Oriflamme 13 Poitite 15 Hybrid 18 Porcupine 19 Fur 20 Climber 21 Spoon 22 Saga 23 Meunier
DOWN: 1 Workshop 2 Rebut 3 Rule of thumb 4 Bodkin 6 Drummer 7 Sable 10 Silly season 14 Lurking 16 Derange 17 Pierce 18 Paces 19 Froze

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Feeling the heat Anna Kournikova's challenge for the Australian Open comes to an end in a straight-sets defeat by Mary Pierce. Report, page 47

Identity of drug-test athlete kept secret

BY DAVID POWELL
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH athletics shifted uneasily in the starting blocks of its new beginning yesterday when it decided not to name the athlete who has returned positive first and second samples from a drugs test. It even suggested that it may not disclose the athlete's identity at all.

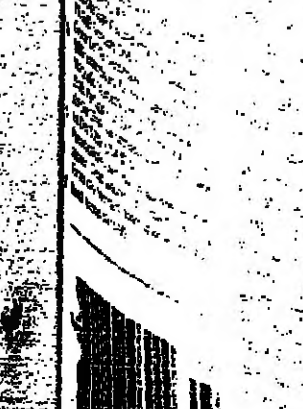
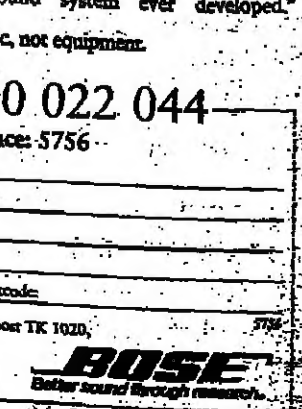
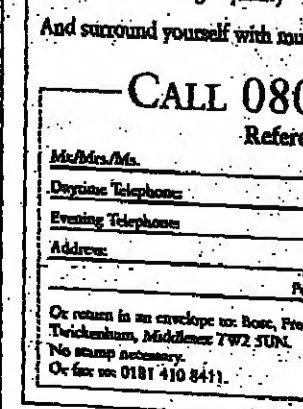
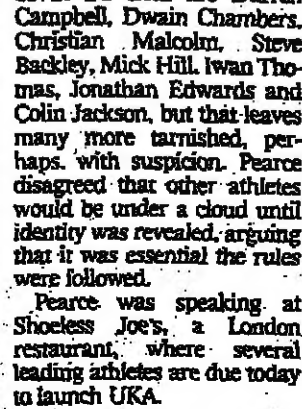
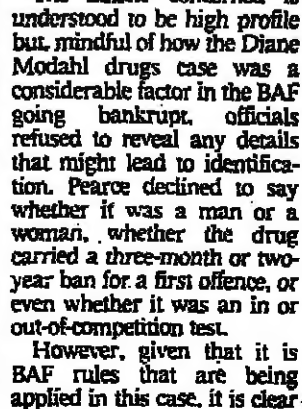
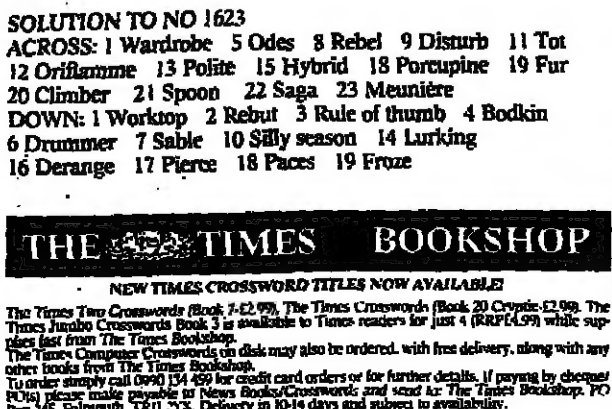
Though the results of the test have been communicated to the athlete, suspension — and naming — can take place only if an independent panel confirms that a doping offence has been committed. This crucial stage in the doping regulations has yet to be completed and has been held up because the sport is in the transition stage between one governing body to another.

UK Athletics (UKA) is launched today as the new national body, in succession to the collapsed British Athletic Federation (BAF). However, Jayne Pearce, the UKA spokeswoman, said yesterday that, although the launch would go ahead as scheduled, the drugs case was delaying full transition. "We were on course," Pearce said. "This slows it up."

The athlete concerned is understood to be high profile but mindful of how the Diane Modahl drugs case was a considerable factor in the BAF going bankrupt, officials refused to reveal any details that might lead to identification. Pearce declined to say whether it was a man or a woman, whether the drug carried a three-month or two-year ban for a first offence, or even whether it was an in or out-of-competition test.

However, given that it is BAF rules that are being applied in this case, it is clear the name — if it's not, we can't. I cannot say where it was taken or the substance involved. The adverse finding was found when BAF rules, UKA is working with BAF and we want to be as open and fair as we can."

Pearce could not say when the independent committee, which must rule on whether there is a case to answer, would be formed, though she suggested it would be "in the next few days". It is up to administrators to determine who should appoint the panel, though, presumably, it will ask David Moorcroft, UKA's chief executive, to take charge.



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